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THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA.

COLLECTED FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES.

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THE LIFE AND TIMES

XX i 22

OF

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA;

ILLUSTRATING THE PROGRESS OF THE

REFORMATION IN ITALY,

DURING THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

XX-i.22

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"La vita sua, la dottrina, il soggetto che prese, erano sufficienti a argli prestare fede."—NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI.

"The World knows nothing of its Greatest Men."—HENRY TAYLOR.

LONDON:
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PREFACE.

At Naumberg, on his way to the diet of Worms, Luther made the acquaintance of a certain zealous priest, who carefully and reverentially preserved in his closet the portrait of Girolamo Savonarola, the monk of Florence, though more as a martyr to liberty and morality, than as a religious confessor. The good priest, however, perceived enough resemblance between the Italian and the German, to draw the attention of the latter to this sacred memento. Silently producing the cherished painting, he held the same awhile before the eyes of Luther, who as silently perused it; but nothing daunted, conceived rather courage than fear from the lesson it presented. The mighty Reformer seems in consequence to have studied the works of his less fortunate predecessor, and in the year 1523 published the Exposition by Savonarola, of the fifty-first and thirty-first Psalms; in the preface to it ex-

pressing his recognition and reverence of the author as one of like mind with himself. This, as well as the spirit of several of the writings of Savonarola which had become known, his earnest denunciation of the ruin of the Romish Church, and the consequent fate prepared for him by the infamous Alexander VI., wakened the liveliest interest for the Italian martyr in the friends of the Reformation. They counted him among the witnesses of the truth, named him the Luther of Italy, affectionately esteeming it of singular importance, as a coincidence, that Savonarola had commenced preaching in the same year (1483), in which Luther was born. Thus say Flacius in particular, whose judgement was echoed by Beza, Wolf, Hottinger, Heidegger, Arnold, Fabricius, and Gerdes, down to the middle of the 18th century. So late as in the 16th century, were several productions of Savonarola translated by Regius, Spangenberg, and others: the latter also wrote his history, in which he gave the greatest praise to his integrity and wonderful stedfastness. In an equal spirit of veneration, although on quite other accounts, the companions of his Order, the Dominicans, even in the Romish Church continued to glorify him; when a writer who had separated from their community sought to irritate his former brothers, by daring the first really important attack on the orthodoxy and prophetic gifts of this their

member, whom they so honoured, and reckoned as a saint. Hostility to the Order to which he had formerly belonged, perhaps also the endeavour to wrest from the 'Lutheran heretics' (of whom he speaks with bitterness in the dedication prefixed) one more historical weapon against the Romish Church, occasioned AMBROSIO CATHARINO POLITO, who was already known by other controversial writings, in particular that against the scarcely deceased Cardinal Cajetanus, to attack the doctrine and prophecies of Savonarola, which he sought to represent as presumptive, erroneous, false, lying, self-contradictory, scandalous, and sufficiently refuted by his own revocation of them;—which revocation however, as the reader of the following biography will perceive, never really existed. On the other hand, Savonarola maintained the splendour of a saint in the ecclesiastical annals of ABRAHAM BZOVIUS, RAYNALDUS, and NATAL ALEXANDER, who were at least useful to history by the publication of different documents; while the Dominican QUETIF first undertook to rescue the honour of Savonarola, attacked by Catharino, on the basis of copious collections from original sources.

During the life of Savonarola, enthusiastic reverence, and passionately hostile opposition, contended for his name; after his death, the most different judgments on him were repeated. GIOVANNI FRAN-

cisco Pico della Mirandola, who, as a confidential friend of Savonarola, might in his biography of him have afforded the truest image, gave, with several useful notices, almost a mere panegyric, the offspring of admiration and superstitious reverence, which concludes with a long and elaborate parallel between Savonarola and Christ, and bears throughout the character of partiality.

The mention of Savonarola made by the French historian Comines, who possessed a sufficient knowledge of the facts, and was convinced no less of his honesty than of his prophetic gift, is candid, sincere, and critical. The celebrated Machiavelli on the contrary represents the latter as problematic, but the former as commanding veneration, and accounts for Savonarola's ruin, by supposing that he did not understand how to be, or was incapable of being, the 'master of envy.' Savonarola's other biographer, Burlamacchi, was of the Order of Dominicans, and out of reverence for Savonarola, soon after his death, wrote the life of his idol (1519), in the same spirit with Pico della Mirandola, though on better grounds, and more supported by facts, but encumbered with miraculous relations which bespeak the superstition of the period. Other writers, less closely connected with the times and the man, have given different opinions, according to their sect or party. Guicciardini, a tolerably impartial relator, col-

lected the different opinions and narratives, and thereby, (especially as he carefully suppressed his own views,) was better entitled to demand a more equitable judgment from posterity, than has been generally awarded. NARDI, though recognizing decidedly the laudable endeavours of Savonarola, in his attempted moral, religious, and clerical reforms, still found his political theocratic plans and hopes too little suited to the circumstances of the times, and taken up without sufficient consideration. NERLI, albeit not forgetting himself, so as to fall into the injustice of passion, still perceived only the monk who sought an undue influence in the government of the State, and wished to transfer it from the hands of the nobility into those of the people; to which decision also GIOVIO in some degree assents, though from his other excellent qualities, he esteemed Savonarola not deserving of so ignominious a death.

Savonarola, meanwhile, was never judged more severely or more unjustly, than by JOHN FRANCIS BUDDEUS, who with wanton criticism sought to render suspicious the testimonies of Comines and Guicciardini as partial; and insidiously followed, as unsuspicious sources, the accounts of the papal journalist BURCHARD, and the printed acts of the process, which were still further enlarged by inculpatory conjectures. He represented Savonarola as a cunning exciter of sedition, who in the politically entangled

circumstances of Florence knew how to avail himself of great eloquence, and diligently nourished the superstition of the people for his own ambitious plans. In this conclusion, GABRIEL NAUDE concurred with equally unproved assertions, while Buddeus saw himself compelled, by closer examination of history, to retract his former opinion, since he recognized the integrity and innocence of Savonarola, but yet accused him of too great participation in political events. More influential were BAYLE's acute remarks, which, however unjust and hypercritical they must appear, compared with history, not only occasioned CHRISTIAN EBERHARD WEISMANN to retract his former favourable judgment of Savonarola, but moreover found too easy an echo among the friends of the newly awakened criticism. In Italy there appeared, after a flimsy attack, founded chiefly on the printed process, an anonymous defence and history of Savonarola, supported by copious corroborations from the historians of that time, as also from his own writings. A biography of Savonarola, which appeared at the beginning of the 19th century, sought to unite the contradictory testimonies of history, in the description that Savonarola was ambitious, fanatical, and daring, but nevertheless a very learned, pious, mild, and well-meaning man. The previous judgment of SCHRŒCKH might be found more satisfactory, who, without acquitting him of self-deception and fanatical

or enthusiastic piety, recognized in his writings, his religious feeling, and his deep penetration into the sins of the time, which he fearlessly denounced, the noble seeds of true piety derived from Scripture, whereby he in more than one respect opened the path to the Reformers, who named him with gratitude, and was himself well worthy of better times and a better fate. Yet old doubts and prejudices emerged again in many forms, as long as its full right and satisfaction was not rendered to history. AMMON, indeed, sought to lay down the principles of Savonarola's theology, from some of his chief writings; but the loudly-heard voice of history described him as the passionately-excited and exciting monk who, without fundamental learning and deeper knowledge of the science of theology, was not able to understand the nature of the Romish Church any more than that of the State.

In English literature, with the exception of GODWIN'S *Lives of the Necromancers*, little or nothing of any mark exists in regard to Savonarola; and even that is merely a sceptical deduction, not at all admissible by a Christian believer. ROSCOE, indeed, in his *Life of Lorenzo de Medici*, gives a garbled statement of Savonarola's proceedings, introducing him always as a vulgar fanatic, who by his blunders deprived Florence of the excellent constitution and asthetic cultivation, which it would otherwise have enjoyed

under the family of the Medici. This position, however, is too absurd to require refutation at this day, when the finger of Providence in all that served to initiate the reformation of the Church is so generally recognized, and the demoralized state of Italy, and the papal see in particular, conceded by every one who treats the history of the period with any show of sincerity. In Germany no fewer than three elaborate lives of Savonarola have appeared in the last six years, by RUDELBACH, MEIER, and RAPP.

It is worthy remark, that a man, the events of whose life are of a character so wonderfully unique, or only to be paralleled—in the estimation of Machiavelli—with those in the lives of Numa, Solon, Lycurgus, and Moses, should have been so cursorily passed over by English biographers, and have held so small a space in general history. The reason is to be found in this, that though his cause in part ultimately prospered, yet in himself Savonarola, unlike Luther, was not successful. The greatest men thus circumstanced are almost unknown to general reputation; but for that reason their lives are the more valuable, and should be prized as choice and rare by the reader of cultivated understanding and refined taste.

In addition to the authorities already indicated, the writer of the following biography has availed himself of many other sources of fact and opinion; a few may be mentioned, notes and references to the authori-

ties consulted being omitted, from a desire, not only to avoid unnecessary display in that kind, but to diminish as much as possible the size and weight of a work intended for popular perusal.—E. g. Benedetto, Razzi, Bottoni, Piero Marco di Parenti, Ammirati, Segni, Muratori, Tiraboschi, Crescimbeni, Varchi, Neri, Bandini, Valori, Varillas, Pierio Valeriano, Béneviené, Tommasi, Sismondi, Meyerhoff, Gordon, Waddington, D'Aubigné, &c. &c. Though small in compass, the following Life of Savonarola contains more facts of his history, and more extracts from his writings, than exist in any other or in all the memoirs and biographies of him hitherto written. Nothing in it has been misstated or overcharged, but the whole subject treated, in its theological, political, and philosophical bearings, with the utmost impartiality that the author could command. We now know that the work in which Savonarola engaged, notwithstanding its temporary failure, was of God, and not to be attributed to any one person, however conspicuous in its direction.

The great Protestant Reformation, thus divinely appointed, thus prepared at divers times and in different places for its developement, is now felt to be a living thing with a principle of growth in it, well rooted in a genial soil, and nourished with all such influences as promote longevity and productiveness.

But some have lately become ashamed of the term Protestant, as if it were a negation only, commissioned to destroy, and not at all to build. As members of the Protestant Church of England, we can permit no such merely negative meaning to a word which has passed into ecclesiastical formularies, parliamentary acts and documents, royal declarations, and coronation oaths. That it is destructive only, is refuted by these facts—involving greater ones—that it has a Church and State, nay, Churches and States, of its own; it has therefore tended to edification, nay, it has edified; it is accordingly an affirmative existence, and negates nothing but the corruptions and abuses of a preceding order, that had fallen into decay and refused to be repaired. Moreover, it has long ceased to oppose the Church of Rome, it now seeks only to supersede her; on the other hand, Rome, by resisting reform, became Protestant, in the negative sense of the term, which she has still continued to be, having no abuses and corruptions in the Church of the Reformation to denounce, or which she has cared to denounce, or, in fact, been able to denounce, knowing how easily she might be recriminated upon. Consequently, the Protestant attitude is maintained by Rome, at the expense of her own catholicity; but by the Anglican Church, to the gain and increase of her's. On this and other accounts, she is entitled to take her place as a co-ordinate and independent institution.

It is for these reasons that the present writer is inclined to object most strenuously to the Church of England being considered as a mere *via media*—between the papacy at the one extreme, and ultra protestantism at the other. This is at best to degrade the Church of England from a high catholic, to a mere syncretic condition, not at all desirable, and even prejudicial. There are proofs enough, in the following Life, that the two extremes, of which the Church of England is supposed to be the mean, exist, and have always existed, in the Church of Rome herself—Apostolicism on the one hand, and even Atheism on the other. Similar opposites are found in the Church of the Reformation at large, together with every shade of opinion between high-church Episcopacy and Socinian dissent; and the Church of England confessedly includes every variety of faith, from Newmanism to Calvinism. We thus see two or more complete orbs forming part, it may be, of the same general system, but each distinguished from the other, and maintaining its separate integrity, having its own revolutions and distinct sphere of existence.

The true *via media*, therefore, is not to be sought in any one entire Church, as the centre between that and other Churches, but in each Church, as the point of agreement, where all her members meet in conformity. There is a large moderate party in the Anglican Church connecting the two extremes, which,

in fact, represents her true spirit and tendency as an institution, the tenets of which are abstracted, not only from her Articles (subject, as these prove to be, to every variety of interpretation), her formularies, and the authoritative interpretations of her bishops and clergy, but also from the Holy Scriptures themselves, and the comments of men of letters in general; to which should be added, the influence of moral essayists, critics, historians, philosophers, and poets, all whose works have great authority with the educated mind, and modify even its religious convictions. Every work designed for the perusal of this large class of Christians must imply every one of these data among the principles of its construction, without which it will equally fail to accomplish the demands of intelligence and the ends of charity.

CONTENTS.

BOOK THE FIRST.

History.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHILDHOOD OF SAVONAROLA.

PAGE

The Church disunited—Nicholas V.—Superstitious practices—Family and birth of Savonarola—Tutored by his grandfather Michele—Physiology and psychology—Mysticism embodied in Italian life and art—Calixtus III.—Pius III.—Canonization of Catherine of Sienna—Probable influence of such circumstances on the infant mind of Savonarola 3

CHAPTER II.

THE BOYHOOD OF SAVONAROLA.

Savonarola taught after ten years of age by his Father—By professional teachers—His rapid progress—Acquaintance with Aristotle and Plato—Wherein they apparently differ to the exoteric student from St. John—

PAGE

Savonarola studies Thomas Aquinas—Primitive teaching of the Apostles—Savonarola's dissatisfaction with the world, and his determination to be a monk—The Dominican Order—The rationalè of monastic institutions—Savonarola a disappointed lover—His early character and habits 18

CHAPTER III.

THE MANHOOD OF SAVONAROLA.

Savonarola's poetic studies—His religious enthusiasm—Difference between his and his father's dispositions—State of the world and the Church—Specimen of Savonarola's lyric poetry—Festival of St. George at Ferrara—Savonarola enters the monastery at Bologna—Letter to his father..... 32

BOOK THE SECOND.

Doctrine.

CHAPTER I.

SAVONAROLA—A LAY-BROTHER.

Savonarola in the monastery employed in teaching the scholastic philosophy—Studies Jerome, Augustine, and Cassian—Hesitates to accept priest's orders—His probable reasons—Augustine's doctrines—Primitive idea of the Church—Savonarola and Luther contrasted .. 49

CHAPTER II.

SAVONAROLA—A PRIEST.

Savonarola always a Reformer—Extracts from his earliest poems—Monastic, not Christian, life—Old and New Testament—Church authority and the Bible—Digres-

PAGE

sion on Chillingworth—Who are Apostles in the priesthood?—True Catholic Apostolicity—Extract from Savonarola's 'Trion della Croce'—Prayer—Meritorious obedience—Power of his conversation—Penitent Soldiers—Preaches first in the church of Lorenzo at Florence—Returns to his monastery 67

CHAPTER III.

SAVONAROLA—A PREACHER.

Savonarola in Lombardy—Expounds the Apocalypse—Babylon a patristic type of Rome—Essential differences between the Gospel of Christ and the religion of Christians—Sixtus III. and Innocent VIII.—Savonarola preaches at Brescia, and denounces impending destruction to the apostate Church of Rome—His prophetic claims—Studies and writings 86

BOOK THE THIRD.

Practice.

CHAPTER I.

SAVONAROLA—A CONTEMPLATIST.

Savonarola considered as a Prophet—The doctrinal value of prayer—The practical evidence of faith—Savonarola at Reggio—Invited to Florence 107

CHAPTER II.

FLORENCE UNDER THE MEDICI.

The family of the Medici—Cosimo's patronage of Greek literature—Chrysoloras and his scholars—Niccolo Niccoli—Platonic academy—Theodore Gaza—Bessarion—

PAGE

George of Trebizond—Germ of monarchism—Pietro—Lorenzo and Giuliano—Conspiracy of the Pazzi—Lorenzo and the King of Naples—Decline of the wealth of the Medici—And consequently of its influence—Levity and frivolity of the literary spirit—Poggio—Beccatelli—And the controversialists—Naturalism in art—Politeness in philosophy—Sensuality in life and manners 114

CHAPTER III.

SAVONAROLA AT SAN MARCO.

Library of San Marco—Savonarola's lectures—Lorenzo's encouragement of ecclesiastical oratory—Mariano de Genezano. The policy of Lorenzo—The character of the times—Savonarola's Garden-Sermon—His style of preaching—Is made prior—Refuses to acknowledge Lorenzo's authority—Lorenzo's condescensions—All in vain—Savonarola inflexible—Machiavelli's opinion on Roman religiosity, human probity—Savonarola's influence 124

CHAPTER IV.

DEATH OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

Description of Savonarola's person — His rival, the preacher Mariano da Genezano—Monastic reform—Novices' conversation—Savonarola's abstemious habits—Rebukes two abbots—His chastity—Visits Bologna—The princess Bentevoglio—Humility—Personal oratory—The Bible—Prediction of the Scourge—State of Christendom—Relative positions of Lorenzo and Savonarola—Three political factions—Lorenzo's sickness, interview with Savonarola, and death—Savonarola's vision 140

CHAPTER V.

INVASION OF CHARLES VIII.

Apparent prosperity of Florence at the death of Lorenzo—Civil contest—Savonarola's prominence—Pietro de

PAGE

Medici's feeble rule—Death of Pope Innocent VIII.—Infamous character of Pope Alexander VI.—Satan in the seat of Christ—Charles VIII. of France—Conduct of Pietro—Savonarola's speech to the King at Lucca—Pietro's expulsion from Florence—Charles VIII. and the Pisans—Charles VIII. and the Florentines—Savonarola's remonstrances—The departure of the French 162

CHAPTER VI.

SAVONAROLA'S INFLUENCE.

Reform of the monasteries—New monastic society—Savonarola's pastoral habits—The devotees of his eloquence—Valori and Alberti—Legends regarding Savonarola—Specimens of his maturer poetry—Practical and devotional works—Epistolary correspondence—He collects the people to consult on the form of government 178

CHAPTER VII.

SAVONAROLA—A LEGISLATOR.

Theocracy—Democracy—Aristocracy—Soderini—Vespucci—Savonarola's political views—Fra Domenico da Ponzo—Ecclesiastical reform—Education—Democratic movements—Committee of Eighty 197

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PROPHET OF FLORENCE AND THE POPE OF ROME.

Relative position of Savonarola, and the reigning Pope, and the clergy—His prevision of martyrdom—His perpetual testimony against the abuses and apostasy of the Church—Conspiracy of the Medici and Fra Mariano de Genezano at Rome against him—Called by the Pope to preach at Lucca—Appeal against this of the Florentine magistracy and Signory—Permitted accordingly to remain at Florence—Subsequent conduct—Agitation of the Pope 220

CHAPTER IX.

CITATION TO ROME.

PAGE

Florence and Pisa—Domestic policy of the former—Savonarola's letter to Charles VIII. betrayed to Alexander VI.—Pope's citation—Savonarola's sickness—Suspends and resumes his pastoral duties—Social reforms—Increasing reputation—Singular carnival—Auto-da-fé of works of art, &c.—Injurious consequences—Self-examinations—The troubler of Italy?—Ludovico 244

CHAPTER X.

SECOND CITATION.

Political changes—Emperor Maximilian—Alexander VI.—An individual Pope fallible—Savonarola sarcastic—Cited a second time to Rome—Papal brief—Savonarola's defensive epistle—Addresses the people by command of the Signory—Increased extravagances at the carnival of 1497—Spiritual dances—Signs and wonders 262

CHAPTER XI.

EXCOMMUNICATION.

Savonarola appeals to the princes of the earth for a council of the Church—Ludovico Sforza—Letter to the Pope from the Signory—Machiavelli to a friend—Conspiracy to restore the Medici—Execution of conspirators—Savonarola insulted while preaching—Riots—Excommunication pronounced—General interest excited 278

CHAPTER XII.

DEFENCE.

Apathy of the Signory—Controversial papers—Savonarola's reply to the Pope—New Signory—The brothers of San Marco and citizens intercede—Savonarola again preaches in 1498—And writes several letters to the Pope, all in a strain of indignant remonstrance 301

CHAPTER XIII.

ORDEAL.

PAGE

Christian and man—Controversy between Domenico da Pescia and Francesco di Puglia—Proposal of the fiery ordeal—Savonarola's reluctance—At last yields—The ordeal—The cowardice of the Franciscans—The superstition of the Host—Violence—Insurrection—Savonarola's imprisonment—Proofs of the Pope's guilty participation in the infamous trick 330

CHAPTER XIV.

INQUISITION AND MARTYRDOM.

Meditations on the fifty-first Psalm — Inquisition appointed—Savonarola questioned and tortured—Francesco Ceccone—Falsification of evidence and process —Condemnation—Thirty-first Psalm — Execution of Savonarola, Domenico da Pescia, and Silvestro Maruffi 353

CONCLUSION 373

APPENDIX 407

ERRATA.

Page	line	
99	7	*for* Giovanfrancesco *read* Giovanni Francesco
150	18	— ever *read* always
155	13	— Piagnone *read* Piagnoni
156	4	
203	34	— their *read* its
210	13	*dele* ' (*the sign of quotation*)
277	4	
289	37	
290	2	*for* San *read* Santa
300	9	
299	36	— him *read* them
346	15	— S. *read* Santa

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA.

BOOK THE FIRST.

History.

51

'Non star, cuor mio, più meco;
Se viver vuoi in pace,
Vanne a Gesu e sta seco,
Che'l mondo è si fallace,
Che ormai a lui non piace,
Se non, chi è traditore.'

SAVONAROLA.

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHILDHOOD OF SAVONAROLA.

The Church disunited—Nicholas V.—Superstitious practices—Family and birth of Savonarola—Tutored by his grandfather Michele—Physiology and psychology—Mysticism embodied in Italian life and art—Calixtus III.—Pius II.—Canonization of Catharine of Sienna—Probable influence of such circumstances on the infant mind of Savonarola.

THE grief of the Church for the loss of her pristine unity was not to be consoled by the licentiousness of the Vatican, nor was the ample learning of Nicholas V. sufficient to compensate the decay of the ancient faith. He might repair, or rebuild altars and temples—remove simony from among the practices of his court—sign a concordat with the German church;—but what availed these or greater benefits, while that faith had been corrupted, and superstition yet received the sanction of the so-called vicar of Christ? Only so recently as the year 1450, this superstition had been made to subserve the avarice of the clergy and people of Rome. The jubilee had again been celebrated, and such multitudes had been induced to seek plenary indulgence at the tombs of the Apostles, that many were crushed to death in churches, and many perished by the accidents insepar-

able from all great assemblages of the people. Ninety-seven pilgrims were thrown at once by the pressure of the crowd from the bridge of St. Angelo, and drowned. These physically were the victims of idolatrous imposture, but there were others afar off who were spiritual sufferers. Nicholas V., with all his learning, had not fortitude to resist the pernicious precedent of former pontiffs, who had afforded, to those who were prevented by personal occasions from locally attending, the facilities of redeeming their omission at a distance. Indeed, not only salvation, but full and complete indulgence for all manner of sin and crime had been brought to every man's private door. For the greater convenience of purchasers, and the greater profit of the venders, both the jubilee and its indulgences had frequently been permitted to every place in Christendom. Those therefore who would not or could not come to Rome might lawfully stay away, if they paid the price for the privilege of receiving at home the anticipatory pardon for which, at a lesser rate, they must have crossed the Alps. In a word, the pope was no longer the vicar of Christ, but of Mammon. No man can serve both.

Nor could the pope attempt such double service without a feeling of shame. To the Poles and Lithuanians, for instance, a private jubilee had been accorded, on the condition that every pious person should pay for his indulgence half of the charge which he would have incurred by the pilgrimage to Rome. This contrivance would have raised a sum so enormous, that the blushing traffickers were compelled by the natural operations of conscience to reduce the proportion to one quarter. The proceeds were even then so considerable, that half of them were confided to the king of Poland for the prosecution of the holy war, a fourth to the queen Sophia for charitable uses, and a fourth for the repair of the

Roman churches. They might have been worse applied; but having been levied on superstition, and, in great part, on that of the poor, they were nevertheless accursed.

Providence had decreed that at this period, GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA should appear on the stage of the world.

This extraordinary man, whom Luther placed with John of Hüss and Jerome of Prague amongst the martyrs of protestantism, was descended from a noble and illustrious race, originally of Padua, and was born of Nicolo Savonarola and Helena his wife, on the 21st of September, 1452, at Ferrara, and soon afterwards baptized with the name of Girolamo Maria Francesco Mattheo. His mother was of the ancient house of Buonacorsi at Mantua, but for his instruction he seems to have been mainly indebted to his father and grandfather. The latter, named Michele, was a celebrated physician; one of the men, whom, to his honour, Nicholas D'Este, Duke of Ferrara, invited to surround his person. To that city, accordingly, the Savonarola family seem to have removed together from Bologna, where they had previously resided. Nor were the brothers of Girolamo undistinguished; the eldest, Ognibene, being a soldier; the fourth, Marco, becoming a Dominican, receiving the habit from the fraternal hands of Girolamo; and the fifth, Alberto, being remarkable for learning and for charity. So beneficial is female association to the mind and heart of youth, that we are glad to find a brief record of two sisters, Beatrice and Clara, of whom the former died early, unmarried, and the other lived long a widow, universally respected, in the house of her brother Alberto. But we hear little of the mother—a deficiency of information to be deeply regretted. Several men of genius have owed so much of early inspiration to

maternal teaching, that it would have been interesting to have traced its operation on the mind of our Reformer.

From the ruggedness of his character, both as boy and man, it is to be suspected that Girolamo Savonarola had never been blessed with the softening influences of such instruction.

Little less effective, however, are the teachings of a competent grandfather or a great uncle;—a truth which the present biographer can personally attest. Michele undertook the boy Girolamo's education, and continued to superintend his studies till he was ten years of age, when death removed the old man from the charge he was so well fulfilling. A taste for letters had led Michele[1], early in life, to exchange the profession of arms for that of physic. After receiving his degree of Doctor of Medicine, he visited the most celebrated schools, especially those of Salerne, Naples, Rome, Paris, and, in part, Germany; and in particular studied chemistry, taking notes of the mineral waters of different countries. On his return, he was named lecturer of the University of Padua. While resident at Ferrara, he occupied the chair of practical medicine. In evidence of his learning many works exist—one (entituled *Speculum Physiognomiæ*) was translated into Greek. They are chiefly on medical subjects; manifesting, however, considerable independence in thought and expression, and a disposition to question the learning and intelligence of some authors then vulgarly esteemed first-rate. Such a man was calculated to excite an ardent youth to precocious development, and it would appear that even at this early period he had not only instructed the lad in grammar

[1] Michele was born in 1384, and commenced life as Chevalier de Rhodes.

and the Latin language, but had also initiated him into his own physiological studies.

Generally distinguished for a love of learning and the arts, many individual physicians have even practised them with considerable success, besides becoming proficient in their own profession. Medicine, also, in the days of which we are writing, was not only a branch of science but of philosophy; concerned not only the body but the soul. Psychological investigations, therefore, were certainly within its sphere; but the practitioner, not content either with their limit or their level, frequently aspired to discover the principles of Being, in their most mystical arcana. In fact, it took a long time to distinguish and exhibit the professions apart from one another, and from the common unity in which they were originally involved. The ecclesiastical at first embraced the whole. Religion—philosophy—art—science—these were only developements of one and the same spirit which comprised them all within the bounds of the Church. The clergy engrossed the learned professions, which are now divided among the laity. They were not only priests, but physicians, surgeons, lawyers, poets, musicians, artists, architects—nay, actors—and to them we are indebted for the introduction of the drama, as well as for the preservation of all kinds of learning.

When some distinction began to be made between the different professions, it was not likely that they would lose all at once the marks of their previous unity. They who undertook to heal the body still viewed it in connexion with the soul and spirit. It is evident that Michele possessed much of the enthusiasm which attaches to these mystical pursuits, particularly when brought in aid of the healing art. Speculation and practice here go together, and play into one another's hands, affording peculiar delight

to the professor from their mutual and varying intercourse. Extravagant notions were doubtless in this way generated; but we frequently misjudge such characters and their opinions—for we are yet only again beginning to appreciate the advantages arising from the union of science with philosophy and religion.

In Italy—however corrupt the form—however degenerate the spirit—all was subservient to the religious sentiment. It might, in the minds of the many, prove only a superstitious feeling; still we must remember that superstition itself is nothing less than the religion of the natural man, and that the many are always the carnally minded, and if divested of superstition, are left without religion. The few, in all ages, have risen to purer perceptions; and what subserved, in the vulgar mind, only the gross purposes of idolatry, might in their's conduce to the highest ends of the purest worship. Here the most glorious art had illustrated the holiest mysteries, and the most subtle 'guesses at truth,' were beautifully embodied in cunning symbols of the sense.

'The pomp of columns and triumphal arches
Confronted them, the Colosseum's grandeur
Encompassed them with wonder, a sublime
Creative spirit in its world of miracles,
Its own fair world, shut-in their souls to gaze.
How felt they, when, within the churches stepping,
Heaven's music hovered o'er them, and the forms
Of perfect fulness prodigally poured
From wall and ceiling; when the Highest and
Most Glorious, there before the raptured sense,
In present motion, swayed; when now they saw
The god-like pictured—to the eye addressed—
The Virgin's Salutation by the Angel,
The Lord's Nativity, the Holy Mother,
The Trinity Descending, and the lustrous
Transfiguration; when at last they saw
The Pope, in pride of office, bless the people,

O ! what is all the gold, the jewelled sheen,
With which the kings of earth adorn themselves !
He is embellished with Divinity,
Truly, heaven's very kingdom is his house,
For not of this poor world is such array [2] !'

Michele and Girolamo, the venerable teacher and his docile grandson; were alike surrounded with the same gorgeous types, which made earth speak everywhere of heaven, and suggested the numberless analogies that link the shadows of the one with the realities of the other. Every thing conspired to promote that precocious opening of the mind, which made Girolamo Savonarola seem, at ten years of age, a family prodigy. Moreover, his mind possessed a poetic aptitude, subsequently so developed as justly to beget for him esteem as a lyric genius.

The era, too, had its startling phenomena, and the character of Nicholas V. was not without interest. He was an indomitable man of intellect—one of those who hope against hope. Thus even when Constantinople fell, he sought by a new crusade to regain to the Church her eastern empire. To this end Æneas Sylvius, (afterwards Pius II.) charmed the princes of Germany by his eloquence; but one Simonet, a monk without any, performed the task required by the mere force of activity, visiting with his personal efforts Venice, Milan, Florence. A simple, unlearned, undistinguished hermit of St. Augustine, without rank, without wealth, without any worldly support, had accomplished by vulgar enthusiasm an enterprize which the pope and his court of cardinals had in vain attempted. Before, however, all the plans proposed could be brought to bear, Nicholas V. died of grief or remorse—not without leaving his testimony against that chair of St. Peter, which he had so infelicitously

[2] Schiller's 'Maria Stuart.' I. 6.

occupied. 'No man,' he said, 'ever crosses my threshold who tells me a word of truth. I am confounded by the artifices of those who surround me: and if I were not restrained by the fear of scandal, I would resign the pontificate, and become once more Thomas of Sarzana. Under that name I had more enjoyment in a single day, than any year can henceforth ever bring me.' He was succeeded by Calixtus III.

From head to foot, the Church had been found corrupt by every office-bearer, whose conscience retained the capacity of making distinction between right and wrong. Inspiration still continued more powerful than learning, yet had learning long substituted inspiration in the Church, notwithstanding that she had not then, as in these latter days, resigned her claims to miraculous gifts, and the power of prophetic vision. She had not congratulated herself on the fact of her being a dead Church, and been consequently content that her pastors, and teachers, and apostles should be likewise dead, venturing the foolish assertion (which we regret lately to have seen made in some respectable tracts devoted to the promotion of ecclesiastical discipline,) that, in this manner, the same relation was preserved between the clergy and their flock, as between a living people and a living priesthood. Bad as they were, the clergy of those times had not expressed themselves satisfied with the mere form of godliness, while lacking altogether the power. Though learned and eloquent, the practice of dialectics had not overlaid the real enthusiasm that naturally belonged to the character of Æneas Sylvius. True, he was a rhetorician, but yet sincere in his efforts as had been poor Simonet. With the great and powerful, however, Æneas sought to plead;—nay, pleaded so successfully, that scarcely was the successor of Nicholas V. established in his dignity, when the princely orator

appeared in Rome, and claimed audience of the new pope and cardinals, to receive the gratifying report of his progress in foreign courts. Calixtus III. was, however, more anxious to apply the infamous system of nepotism to the advantage of his family, than to take vigorous measures for extending or securing the dominion of the ecclesiastical city of the world. The ignoble passion of avarice had substituted the mysterious sentiment of spiritual ambition in the pontifical bosom, and the riches of the apostolical treasury were exhausted on the worthless nephews of the temporary holder of the papal see. Then also the worldliness of Æneas Sylvius' character shewed itself. When the same Calixtus was accused by the Germans of having raised exorbitant contributions, under the pretext of a holy war, and violated the concordat made with his predecessor; then Æneas Sylvius, who had formerly opposed pontifical oppression, and only recently advocated the imperial claims, was so unmindful of the grace of consistency, as to defend and justify the wrong doings of all popes whatsoever, and the existing pope in particular, against the gainsaying prelate-princes of Germany, and especially against the national ingratitude in having resolved to withhold contributions from Rome, to prevent appeals, to restore elections to the ordinaries, to refuse annates, and so, in effect, to deprive the sovereign pontiff of the plenitude of his power. Doubtless, he had strong motive for such a course of action. The chair of St. Peter was almost within his own reach. Calixtus III. was old—very old. In fact, he reigned only three years, and the fortunate and assiduous Æneas Sylvius thus soon became in very deed Pius II. At the council of Mantua, called by him for promoting the crusade which he had so much at heart, he asserted the paramount and unappealable authority of the holy see, in a celebrated bull, which denounced all

appeals from the pope to general councils, 'as an execrable abuse unheard of in ancient times—a practice which every man instructed in law must regard as contrary to the holy canons, and prejudicial to the Christian republic,'—and then proceeded to excommunicate all individuals, whether imperial, royal, or pontifical, who might thereafter resort to such appeals, as well as all universities and colleges, and all others who should promote and counsel them. Nor was he content with this official edict, but went the length of publishing a retractation of his own early opinions;—confessing, that being liable to human imperfection, he had said or written much which might unquestionably be censured—that he had sinned like Paul, and persecuted the Church of God through want of sufficient knowledge, but that now he imitated the blessed Augustine, who having fallen into some erroneous expressions, retracted them:—adding, 'Believe me now that I am old, rather than then, when I spake as a youth; pay more regard to the sovereign pontiff than to the individual; reject Æneas, receive Pius. The former name was imposed by my parents—a Gentile name,—and in my infancy: the other I assumed as a Christian in my Apostolate.'

Transactions like these could not fail of impressing an imagination so quick, so ardent, as the boy Savonarola's. They tended apparently to support the external dignity of the Church, the rights of which they asserted. All indicated that a struggle was proceeding for the maintenance of her authority—her supremacy—her divine origin. It needs, too, as we shall show, to be *in* the fold of the Church to fully understand her corruptions. On the outside, the decencies were at this period well preserved, and even increased attention was paid daily to their observance. At all times, too, the ecclesiastical institution has been a positive benefit, and has included

within its bosom individuals whose personal holiness was calculated to give elevation to any society. The virtues and piety of the inferior clergy were always sufficient to preserve the respectability of the ordinary ministrations. The zeal and sincerity of such individuals, though almost unnoticed by the historian, were fruitful of good example in the retired places of life, where the serenity of daily occupation is undisturbed by the intrigues of those who are seated in authority. By them the cumbrous machinery of the court and prelacy of Rome was supported long after it had given way at head-quarters. 'It was their virtues,' says a modern writer, 'which sustained the vices of their superiors; it was their humble piety which enabled mitred apostates so long to outrage the name of Christ. And it was not, till the poison had descended to the extremities of the system, and communicated to the village pastor some portion of its hierarchal malignity, that the Church of Rome reeled to its foundation, and by its weakness and depravity invited and justified the rebellion of its children.' But until this result was produced, it preserved enough of ostensible beauty to awaken and maintain the enthusiasm of the young and ardent spirit of Girolamo.

An occurrence too happened at this time, which, considering the mystical bias that had been given to his mind, and the poetical temperament that he had derived from nature, was calculated to excite all his genius, and call out the latent energies of a pious soul.

It was not in art or theory alone that mystical sentiment in Italy received expression, but in the daily business of life—in character and conduct. The Church had still her saints—her miracles—her gifts of prophecy. She still asserted the possession of 'Open Vision'—and the learned Pius II. was now to sanction with his eminent authority claims of

an extraordinary character, by performing the long delayed canonization of the celebrated Catharine of Sienna, who had died eighty years before, but whose reputation had so continually increased, that at length the popular anxiety could be no longer disappointed.

St. Catharine of Sienna was a disciple of St. Dominic, who not only reverenced his virtues, but imitated his discipline; interposing her own personal efforts to smooth the political difficulties of her country, and seeking to influence, by her reason and authority, the most momentous concerns of the Church. She was a daughter of a citizen at Sienna, early embraced the monastic life, and soon acquired extraordinary reputation for sanctity. In the rigour of her fastings and watchings, in the duties of seriousness and silence, in the fervency and continuance of her prayers, she far surpassed the merit of her holy sisters; and the austerities she practised prepared people for the marvels she related. From no human teacher, but by personal communication with Christ himself, Catharine of Sienna derived the spiritual knowledge she professed. Once the Saviour appeared to her, accompanied by the holy mother and a numerous host of saints, and in their presence solemnly espoused her, placing on her finger a golden ring, adorned with four pearls and a diamond. The vision vanished, but the ring remained sensible and palpable to her though not to others. Nor was this all. The devotee had sucked from the wound in his side the blood of the Lord; she had received his heart in exchange for her own; she bore on her body the marks of his wounds. But unlike the stigmata on the body of St. Francis, on hers they were imperceptible, save to her own gifted vision. At length the fair enthusiast was called from her cell by the messengers of the Florentine people, and officially charged with an important commission to

Gregory XI., then resident at Avignon—no less than to mitigate the papal displeasure and reconcile the Church with the Republic. She succeeded in her errand. Admitted to an early audience, she delivered to the pope her arguments in the vulgar Tuscan, explained however by the attendant interpreter; with which his holiness was so satisfied that he finally left the dispute entirely to her decision. She then addressed the pontiff on his own duties and prospects, and urged on him the obligations he owed to his Italian subjects, to the tombs of the apostles, to the chair of his mighty predecessors. Whether influenced by his own predisposition—by the compulsion of circumstances—or the spirit that spake in her—Gregory XI. shortly after removed his residence from Avignon to Rome. On his death-bed, he seems to have repented of the confidence that he had thus put in private revelations; declaring that 'he had been seduced by such to reject the rational counsels of his friends, and had dragged himself and the Church into the perils of a schism, which was then near at hand, unless Jesus her Spouse should interpose in his mercy to avert it.'

The schism dreaded by Gregory XI. was not averted. Ere long, and Christendom was convulsed with the contest of two popes, one at Avignon and one at Rome. The female saint supported the claims of Urban VI. against those of Clement VII. The spiritual obedience of Europe was divided. The doctors and learned men of the age took both sides of the controversy, which soon became voluminous. Many pious and gifted persons, say Roman Catholic writers, who are now numbered among the saints of the Church, were to be found indifferently in either obedience—proof sufficient (as they assert) that the eternal salvation of the faithful was not in this case endangered by their error. Catharine was conspi-

cuous not only as the advocate, but the adviser of the Roman pope. Not only did she declare herself loudly for Urban, and employ her talents, her eloquence, and force, in writing and exhorting all the world to acknowledge him—but in six epistles addressed to himself she discreetly recommended him to relax somewhat from the extreme austerity that had made him so many enemies. But he listened not to the admonitions of his inspired instructress, and continued to rule not only with harshness and rigour, but even with cruelty.

Such were some of the acts of Catharine of Sienna; and having thus distinguished herself by her eminent piety, she continued for the rest of her life in the perfect odour of sanctity. After her death continual miracles were performed at her tomb, and the faithful demanded her canonization. A duke of Austria and a king of Hungary even condescended to solicit it from the pontiff of the day, but the confusion of the Church and the disorders of the holy see prevented the ceremony. No less a genius than the learned and enlightened Pius II. was fated to pay that honour to the long since departed enthusiast. By no prelate less accomplished, less liberal, less gifted, less distinguished, was Catharine of Sienna to be enthroned among the saints of the Church, which in her life she had influenced by counsels received by express revelation from the Church's Spouse.

On the learned yet mystical spirit of Michele, and the no less poetic than enthusiastic temperament of Girolamo Savonarola, such an event, so famous in all subsequent ages, and productive of such popular sensation in its own, could not fail of making a deep and lasting impression. One can imagine the venerable grandsire and his excitable pupil in close and anxious communion on this engrossing topic. What questions! what rejoinders! How was wonder awakened!

how was faith requickened, stimulated, emboldened and encouraged!

Such was Italy in the childhood of Savonarola; such were the influences, and such the times, amidst which his infant intelligence looked out on a world where good and evil maintain perpetual conflict. They must be well considered, if we would arrive at a true estimate of his character and history.

CHAPTER II.

THE BOYHOOD OF SAVONAROLA.

Savonarola taught after ten years of age by his father—By professional teachers—His rapid progress—Acquaintance with Aristotle and Plato—Wherein they apparently differ to the exoteric student from St. John—Savonarola studies Thomas Aquinas—Primitive teaching of the Apostles—Savonarola's dissatisfaction with the world and his determination to be a monk—The Dominican order—The *rationalé* of Monastic Institutions—Savonarola a disappointed lover—His early character and habits.

Upon the death of his grandfather, Savonarola was not left without a tutor. His father assumed the office. He was nevertheless under a moral and mental influence of a more worldly character; but still he was happily placed, since education is never so legitimately conducted, as when in the hands of its natural guardians—the parents of the pupil.

The mind of Savonarola had opened so much in consequence of the precocity to which it had already been excited, that his father determined on having him without delay carefully and liberally instructed by competent teachers. His native town (which only lately had been honoured with the presence of two celebrated teachers, Guarino of Verona, and Giovanni Aurispa, a Sicilian, both of whom had studied Grecian antiquity in Greece itself) fortunately possessed such, and by these he was aided not a little in the task of self-culture, that had become habitual

to his mind. So greatly zealous was he for the truth, as well as so much accustomed to investigate its evidences for himself, that he was wont, when their views differed, to contend with his teachers, and assert his right to maintain his own. His attention was speedily directed to the Greek and Roman lore which had then recently redawned upon the world. It was under the guidance of his father, however, that he studied logic and philosophy; and such was his persevering diligence, and so penetrating his understanding, that he soon found himself in advance of his schoolfellows, not only in amount of knowledge, but in the readiness of his intelligence and the accuracy of his judgment. It is added, too, that his general character preserved him from envy, and that all who knew him wished him well, and joyfully formed the greatest expectations of his future celebrity.

His progress must have been rapid, for we soon find that such was his acquaintance with Plato and Aristotle (the latter he appears to have studied first), that the writings of these sages had already induced those 'unworldly yearnings' which are ever found to accompany in the minds of ingenuous youth the first perceptions of the ideal. Not only was Girolamo's thirst for knowledge increased, but his desire for moral elevation grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength. He began at once to apprehend, in the system of things about him—in the conduct of individuals and general society—and, perhaps, in his own ordinary practice—a rule of living and acting repugnant to those sublime principles which he had been taught to appreciate in the works of his masters, and the truth of which he had recognized in the aspirations of his own better spirit. His friends were delighted with his unhesitating improvement in science and philosophy; but for himself, he could not avoid feeling a dissatisfaction which

he kept secret, but which nevertheless was acquiring in its concealment a sacred energy, that ultimately produced decided results—such as at once distinguished him for force of character and personal resolution.

At this point it is, that the mind of youth recognizes the reality of a power to which the world is opposed, but which, notwithstanding, is, in fact, universally recognized. This recognition is embodied in the institution that we call the Church. The Church and the world are scripturally represented as perpetual antagonists. The former ought to maintain pure principle against corrupt practice, and this is exactly what was done by the founders of it. Only those who were willing to do this were admitted into it. God, in the first instance, only added to it 'such as should be saved.' Afterwards many were admitted who were never other than children of wrath, and who, like Judas, accumulated perdition by the guilt of treachery.

Savonarola had not yet advanced so far into the question as this discovery implies. He had only recognized the antagonism of the world to the pure principle which he had accepted as the law of his own character and conduct. Nor had he yet probably received it as more than an idea, since only as such, if exoterically studied, (and Savonarola had not yet the means of deeper insight) it is taught, or seems to be taught, by Plato and Aristotle. He had yet to learn, with St. John, to recognize it as a Person—as not only a Principle but a Being—and that Being, GOD[4]. According to the mystical evangelist, that divine Being celebrated in all ages as the Messiah,

[4] See this subject very nicely treated in an 'Enquiry into the Heresies of the Apostolic age,' by the late Rev. E. Burton, D.D., Regius professor of Divinity, and Canon of Christ's Church, Oxford.

the Christ, the Anointed, the Word, is veritably the Son of God, in the beginning with God, and himself God,—as well as the life of the human soul and the light of the intelligence of man. He, however, does not neglect or undervalue the latter truth, but declares it boldly, announcing the eternal Word as a principle also which may be claimed by every individual of the race as the common inheritance. Nevertheless, 'the light that lighteth every man coming into the world' is manifested in different individuals, and in the race at different times, in very different degrees. In the best of men, under the best of circumstances, it is but as a 'light shining in the darkness that comprehends it not.' In natures, and with peoples, that need expansion beyond the sphere of sensual existence, the 'life which is the light of men' is so partially and feebly exhibited, as scarcely to be recognizable. They are indeed pronounced as alive to none other than the natural desires and perceptions, and therefore dead in trespasses and sins. In point of intellect, they are but one remove from idiots. 'To be carnally minded,' we are further told, 'is death.'

It is to be feared that the majority of mankind are in this undeveloped, unquickened condition. 'High capacious powers,' as the poet asserts, 'are folded up' in their souls, but remain unwitnessed; whence beings, capable of immortality, die like the beasts that perish,—giving no sign of the divinity within. A few, however, have at all times and in all places been privileged to illustrate the purpose of God in the creation of man, and to these we are indebted, under God, for examples of what it is possible for man to become.

Excellent as some of these examples are, reaching almost to the summit of human perfection; such,

however, is the disposition of our reason to regressive speculation, that it still remains dissatisfied, and insists on conceiving a yet untried possibility. It requires to be furnished indeed with more than the relative instances of a law, and demands such an embodiment of the principle it acknowledges as shall serve for a Standard, and constitute an absolute Criterion by which it shall be regulated in its judgments of all attempts at similar realization. The four Gospels contain the records of the life and death on earth of a Divine Being in the form of a man, known by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whose character and conduct were such as to justify his believers in accepting Him as the very incarnation of the Word of God—the personal fulfilment of the law of the Omnipotent—and the perfect realization of the Principle which is with the Eternal—and who was accordingly acknowledged by them (though not by the world) as the Christ who was to come, the Son of the everlasting Father, the Author and Finisher of the faith of man. By the world He was despised and rejected, and by those who ruled in its high places, ecclesiastical and political, He was arraigned of blasphemy, mocked, insulted, scourged, and crucified. After three days, He rose from the sepulchre in which He had been buried, and subsequently returned into the heavens from which He had originally descended, as the Saviour of the human race. There, seated at the right hand of the Father, He received gifts for men, shedding anon the gracious influences of his holy Spirit on his disciples—enabling 'some to be apostles—some prophets—some evangelists—some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of the Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto

a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ[5].'

To return. The manifold subtleties of Aristotle seem little to have pleased Savonarola, whether in youth or manhood. Though pursuing the philosophy of the Stagyrite only after the fashion of the time, the strong practical sense, for which he was remarkable, could not fail to detect various errors, that during the solitary period of his early life and the public discussions of his later age he took every opportunity of denouncing. With Plato, with whom, as we have mentioned, he became subsequently acquainted, he was better satisfied—studying and copying his dialogues indeed with enthusiasm, and coinciding with the opinions of the time which quoted him even from the pulpit as 'the godlike man.' The writings of Thomas Aquinas, to whom he is said to have devoted his nights as well as days, likewise exercised his ingenuity, and sharpened his reason; familiarizing his mind with speculations calculated to be exceedingly useful to him in after life. The angelic doctor's 'Commentaries on Aristotle' probably assisted Savonarola in that clear insight into those errors which he subsequently gloried in exposing, and his 'Sum of Theology,' together with his voluminous exercitations on the Old and New Testaments, were adapted to divert the pupil from physic to theology, and give a religious direction to the mind. It is customary with experimental sciolists of our own days to undervalue the labours of this mighty dialectician, but in so doing they quite as much err by their exclusiveness in one direction as perhaps the scholastic theologians did by their pertinacity in the opposite. The divine, the spiritual and the moral faculties of the human soul were strengthened by such speculations, and not only

[5] Eph. iv. 11. 13.

Savonarola, but many men of marvellous genius were fortified in their love of truth by the method of *à priori* study. A logical exercise of higher value and wider utility, however, is doubtless to be appreciated in the careful and critical perusal of the New Testament Scriptures.

In them we find a high and pure doctrine—such as had never been previously promulged in temple or school—surpassing not only the subtlety of Aristotle, but excelling the sublimity of Plato. The earliest disciples of the Messiah declared aloud to the people of Jerusalem that the last days had come, when God had said, 'I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved[6].' And therewithal they demanded of all men that they should repent and be baptized every one in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, declaring that thus they should receive the Holy Ghost: adding, 'For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call[7].' Such a doctrine, though individually received by many, was not generally patronized by the world, nor by the rulers of its institutions. By these it was interpreted in a carnal sense only, and they failed not

[6] Acts ii. 17—21. [7] Ib. 38, 39.

to allege that it was nothing short of 'blasphemy against Moses and against God, against the temple and against the law.' Nor was the truth long without a martyr, who was accused of having said that Jesus of Nazareth should destroy the temple and city of the Jews, and should change the customs which Moses had of old delivered to them. So hard it is for institutions that have been long established, to tolerate the statement of those verities, on the foundation of which they must, nevertheless, have themselves been originally edified. Alas! initiated by the enthusiasm of their earlier members, they substitute thenceforth the rules of an order for the impulses of the individual, until at last mere precedent and custom supply the place of those high feelings, and that conscious inspiration, in which at first they had their genesis.

Not yet aware how that the Church, instead of rebuking, had long supported the world in its worst evils; Savonarola, now a young man, acting on his individual impulses, looked towards her as a shelter and a refuge from what he scorned, and would fain shun. His conscience, enlightened by philosophy, had condemned the world, and he sought in religion for redress and safety.

The mind of Girolamo was indeed tossed to and fro by the state of sentiment into which he had been thrown. He contemplated the wickedness of the world with horror—it was a monster of a mien so hideous as not to be endured. He turned from it, therefore, to God—to his own soul. He sought the converse of angelic visitants—of spiritual powers—the privileges of divine communion. He desired to revel for ever in the beauty of holiness, and avert his attention altogether from the ugliness of sin. Hard task for the individual! We need sympathy, else such aspirations fall back upon the heart, like scorch-

ing steam, and aggravate its anguish. The Church took—or professed to take—all to her bosom who felt and thought like him. She had gathered many such together. Within her folds were the companions who could partake his sorrows and his consolations, with whom he could talk of heaven and heavenly things. Many were the chambers of her house. Wisdom had builded it, and she had hewn out there her seven pillars. She had provided means for the sustenance of piety, receptacles for the nurture of true excellence, and much that was required for the moral necessities of man. Religion had been beneficially invoked to supply the defects of civil government—the name of the Church had been associated with peace. The *truce of God* mitigated the fury of private warfare, by limiting the hours of vengeance, and interposing a space for the operation of justice and humanity. The advocate of the weak—the adversary of arbitrary power—the dispenser of charity—the Church of Rome provided asylums both for the criminal and the pious. The discipline so strictly inculcated by the earlier prelates, notwithstanding its subsequent abuse, was profitable in its legitimate applications. It arrested the first steps and restrained the earliest dispositions to sin. Confession and penance, and the awful censures of the Church, unopposed by the popular belief, and dispensed with sincerity and discretion, are potent instruments for the improvement of society whether civilized or uncivilized.

To the safeguard of such a Church, Savonarola had resolved upon confiding his eternal interests—in one of her chambers, under the shade of one of her pillars, he would find repose. The principle of monachism in particular attracted his preference. He was charmed by the peace it assured, by the security it offered. He was, though so young, animated by the

same passion for retirement and contemplation as had peopled in the East the mountains and wildernesses with holy recluses. He had yet to understand and to exemplify the utilities which in the West monastic establishments would mainly subserve, namely, association and education, by these means giving an impulse to the human understanding, which otherwise it would not have received; whence, indeed, the Reformation of the Church proceeded from the bosom of these her institutions.

Savonarola then had determined to be a monk, and his mind was bent on joining the Dominicans. Perhaps, the fact of Thomas Aquinas having been of this order might have swayed him. There are, however, many good reasons why he should have preferred it. The most learned and the most eloquent, it was also the most active of all the forms of monachism. It professed mendicity and practised preaching. Its great purpose was the extirpation of heresy from the papal dominions. In the valleys of Piedmont and the cities of Languedoc, it commenced the crusade which ended in founding the Spanish Inquisition, and furnishing it with its sternest ministers. St. Dominic, from whom the order received its name, was, at the period of the first persecution of the Albigeois, a young ecclesiastic, remarkable for the severity of his life, the extent of his learning, the persuasiveness of his manner, and the ardour of his zeal. He was a Spaniard of a noble family, and of the order of canons regular; first having proved in Languedoc the power of his eloquence, and delighting in its display, he became desirous of establishing a fraternity devoted to its exercise, which, by a bull of Honorius III., he was enabled to accomplish. About the same time St. Francis established his rival order; and, though differing much in their origin, both, in the course of time, assimilated in

their practice, and each brotherhood resolved itself into a society of itinerant preachers. In some respects, however, they materially differed. In one of the controversies which frequently raged between the two orders, the Franciscans were so rebellious to the holy see as formally to attempt the deposition of a pope, while the Dominicans were not only submissive to its authority, but uncompromisingly devoted to its interests: in internal discipline also it excelled its rival.

In learning it excelled all the orders. The monks of St. Dominic cultivated the science of controversy, and soon became almost irresistible in its use. They exhausted the resources of scholastic ingenuity in the defence of the papal government. Nor in their own behoof were they awanting. They contended during no less than thirty years for a right to lecture in the schools of Paris, and ultimately triumphed over their opponents. In striving for themselves, however, they had indirectly wounded the Church—the possibility of her erring having been in the course of the argument openly asserted.

One of the reasons which swayed the mind of Savonarola in his choice, was doubtless the encouragement given by the Dominican order to eloquence of the highest kind. He was already conscious of the first impulses of the orator. Nature right-early makes her secret instincts felt in the soul of a man of genius. But Savonarola's motives, notwithstanding, were mainly religious—he was kindled by a sacred enthusiasm, and quickened with the flame of piety. For his disgust with the world, too, there was sufficient reason in the character of the age. Long as Christian principles had been struggling in a world of error, their triumph was not yet assured. There was yet little promise that conduct altogether righteous would be permitted to persons busied in secular

pursuits. There was still in the heart of man a virtual paganism, as strong as that which impeded the first progress of Gospel truth, and justified retreat and seclusion to the Orientals and Africans of an earlier epoch. The temperament of Savonarola was as ardent as theirs; his imagination as impetuous. In him, likewise, the theory of religion had a probable tendency to mysticism and bodily mortification, though not its practice to mere ceremony and unreasoning superstition. He believed too in the boast of St. Bernard, that those who had embraced the monastic condition lived with greater purity than other men; that they fell less frequently, and rose more quickly; that they walked with greater prudence; were more constantly refreshed with the spiritual dew of heaven; rested with less danger, died with greater hope.

Nor was this boast unfounded. The basis of monastic institutions had always been laid in the reformation of manners. Their history, indeed, presents a series of reformations. Like that of the earliest Cenobites, each successive institution began in poverty, in the most rigid morality, in the duties of religion, of education, of charity. Each grew into power and wealth, and then, by reason of its brightness, became corrupted. Wealth, in every instance, was followed by relaxation of discipline and contempt of decency. After the first, each new order arose out of the corruption of its predecessor. Reformation had, so many times, become necessary; and the same system was thus repeatedly regenerated under another, or even under the same name, and passed under the same deteriorating process to a fresh corruption. At each period of regeneration also the reformation within had to contend with some similar reformation that had commenced without. In this fact, the miraculous interposition of Providence may be clearly traced.

There is reason, therefore, for the pious gratitude with which the advocates of the Church of Rome declare, that 'the same God who raised up St. Athanasius against the Arians, and St. Augustine against the Pelagians, and St. Dominic and St. Francis against the Albigenses, deigned, in a later and still more perilous age, to call for the spirit of Loyola against Luther and Calvin.' The time will at length arrive when, as deep calleth unto deep, those who are within and those who are without shall concur together in the restoration of that Catholic purity which is neither of Rome nor of Germany, nor of Spain nor Geneva, but of that holy city, that New Jerusalem, which cometh down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

As a bride! How frequently in Scripture is the emblem of marriage used to denote the relations of the Church both with man and God. It is because the spring and root of religion is love—for God is love. Savonarola was a loving soul, though of a sanguine-choleric temperament—hence he was enabled early to subdue his passions, and thus acquired, notwithstanding, an equable tranquillity and self-control, that never deserted him even under the severest trials. It was probably disappointed love which gave him the first distaste for merely secular pursuits—for up to his twentieth year he had certainly no intention of abandoning the world, having until then continued his medical studies, and indeed entertained thoughts of matrimony. At this period too he composed some erotic and elegiac verses, which subsequently he committed to the flames. Often a blighted earthly affection is translated into an enduring heavenly devotion. Nevertheless, this circumstance was no more than the external occasion, not the essential cause of his determination—for he was evidently predisposed to a serious life. In his infancy he had

ever taken little interest in the ordinary sports of his comrades—as a boy he was of a mute and retiring disposition. Though he could not avoid the circles of his father's house, he mixed in them mostly as a silent spectator; when, however, he spoke, it was with friendliness, grace, and dignity. Public places of resort he avoided entirely, so that the much-frequented ducal castle of his native town he had only once visited; preferring solitary walks, where he might meditate without interruption.

CHAPTER III.

THE MANHOOD OF SAVONAROLA.

Savonarola's poetic studies—His religious enthusiasm—Difference between his and his father's dispositions—State of the World and the Church—Specimen of Savonarola's lyric poetry—Festival of St. George at Ferrara—Savonarola enters the monastery at Bologna—Letter to his father.

THE religious enthusiasm of Savonarola was doubtless sustained by his poetical temperament. It has been said that every poet is a religious man—it may be asserted with more truth that, in the highest sense, every religious man is a poet. The literature of the Italian poets was, in the fifteenth century, calculated to corroborate the pious predilections of the student. It was also a study which the times were far from discouraging; nay, it is charged against the leading men of the age, that 'they admired the elegance of a finely cadenced sonnet more than the majesty and simplicity of the Scriptures.' This, however, may apply to the critical taste of a period immediately succeeding, rather than to that of which we are writing. The present was an age of production, not of criticism. Savonarola felt as a poet, not as a man of taste. He felt as PETRARCH and DANTE, as FOLCHETTO and SORDELLO had felt before him; that is, his enthusiasm was not excited by his admiration of a fine poem; but the fine poems he was qualified to write owed their origin to the inherent enthusiasm of

the poetic spirit. The Tuscan language and poesy were more than the mere amusement of his leisure hours. They could not fail of becoming pregnant sources of inspiration, and most valuable means of educating a mind of the highest order. The bold and mighty spirit of DANTE, for instance, involved the whole culture of his time, clearly mirroring catholic faith and the entire world itself in his divine work. His wonderful 'Comedia' is a mundane poem: it constitutes a universal drama of the new era, the possession of which it yet maintains without a rival, having moreover no antitype in an earlier age, except perhaps the Edda. The eagle flight which rendered the poet illustrious, elevated also the language in which he wrote, and enabled the Italian tongue to obtain a rapid supremacy over her elder sisters. From Dante the student would derive a precedent and example for the most vehement protestation against the abuses and corruptions of the church of which he was a member. Scepticism touching her infallibility had been already suggested in the 'Inferno:' nor was this state of opinion at all mended by the attempted compromise that desired permission to hold that 'some things might be theologically true which were philosophically false.' The controversy became thus, as it were, but a sham strife, a mock 'feud between nothing and creation,' while a new life, spiritual and moral, was in progress of regeneration 'under the ribs of death.' PETRARCH expressed this new life, this mighty impulse which was now agitating the very heart of Christendom, and added to its impetus by giving to it the tone and voice of love himself, thus advancing mysticism under the disguise of passion. BOCCACCIO rendered it still more attractive by investing it with a romantic costume. That his romance had a burgher and civic air, was a popular element which served to carry on

the movement in a descending direction, into the middle and lower ranks of society. What Petrarch had concealed in learned Latin, Boccaccio told the people in his own familiar dialect. From Petrarch's erotics, Savonarola might indeed learn, that to pass existence in the study of poetry was to live always in an innocent yet beautiful dream,—was, in fact, journeying to heaven by a path strewn with flowers—

> 'Da lèi ti vièn l' amóróso pénsièro,
> Che, méntre 'l ségui, al sómmo Ben t'invía,
> Pòco prezzando quel, ch'ogni uòm desia.
> Da lèi ti vièn l'animósa leggiadrìa
> Ch'al cièl ti scòrge pér destro séntièro;
> Sì ch' i' vò gia della speranza altèro[8]:'—SONETTO IX.

From Boccaccio's tales he might also learn that this same poetry could be profitably applied to the things and persons and events which are usually investigated by 'the light of common day;' that thereby they might be more satisfactorily interpreted, as well as invested with a lustre which should abide with them for ever, and give them a permanent and cosmical value. But for himself it was reserved, in the next place, to evolve a point for the ascetic and theosophic intelligence, wherein vital religion was ensured a severe species of scientific demonstration to minds prepared by appropriate discipline for its reception.

The two great nurseries of the Dominicans were Paris and Bologna. Savonarola was attached to Bologna, not only on account of its nationality and convenience, but its family associations. He was only returning to the spot from which his father had emi-

[8] 'She wakes, within, the thought of purest love,
Which from the creature rises to its God
Unsullied by the breath of mortal flame:
Through her the springs of inspiration move,
Opening so bright a path from earth's dull clod,
That heaven's blest joys even now my soul doth claim.'
S. WOLLASTON.

grated. Moreover, he had a friend, one Ludovico,—a Bolognese and brother of the Order—who exercised some influence over his opinions. His early philosophical and poetical studies had now all merged into religious feeling. Thomas Aquinas had evidently absorbed both Plato and Aristotle. Nothing appeared to Savonarola so desirable as a religious life. The conviction, however, which had now become familiar to him, was not without its peculiar troubles, its secret sorrows. For the first time, he began to feel himself alone in the world, as consecrated and set apart from his family, his friends, and his acquaintance. He felt within the influence of a mystery, that, like an inspiration, had taken possession of his being. He was perplexed in mind and in heart—he suffered much, . . . but in silence. So far from complaining of his state of mind, it is evident that he concealed it from his connexions, and in particular from his father.

The first impulses of enthusiasm, in all its kinds, are generally accompanied with an instinctive caution, by which the emotion is ostensibly suppressed. The patient feels that the world can have little sympathy with the new condition of being into which he has passed. There are fears, too, with the most earnest and faithful, whether hypocrisy or vanity may not underlie the sentiment or aspiration. Precocious genius uniformly conceals its early efforts, and dreads investigation into the imperfect results of a power which has, indeed, already shown its truth to the possessor, but yet wants practice and facility to vindicate its claims on the approbation of strangers or indifferent persons, nay, even of friends. It is the same with piety, while yet struggling from the darkness into which original sin has plunged the human soul. Doubt clings to the combatant until victory is assured. Conscious of indwelling corruption, he suspects the sincerity of his repentance, the

genuineness of his resolution, until the fruits are realized and faith proved by good works. Add to this, that the world actually opposes, and feels an interest in antagonizing, all attempts at either artistic or moral excellence. It desiderates that equality which reduces all things to the sensuous level. Even the good would fain continue the state of mediocrity, which they have experienced to require the least exertion, and which, perhaps, satisfactorily represents to them the standard of human perfection. In a word, individual effort is felt to be an assumption of superiority, whether the talent be natural or spiritual; and the mass of mankind resist it, sometimes actively, and, if not, always by a species of *vis inertiæ*. Such is the trial appointed by Providence, to prove the worth of the candidate for the blessings of heaven, or the honours of the world.

Specific circumstances vary particular instances. In the case of Savonarola, an evident discordance existed between the disposition of the father and son. The knowledge, though so eminently metaphysical, which had been imparted to the latter, was all designed by the former to qualify the youth, from whom so much was expected, for the profession of a physician, which had brought already so much glory to the family. But the mind of Savonarola had received its bent; and it was to the exclusively spiritual side of human developement that it had been inclined. An instinct for truth had been awakened, and given birth to an earnestness of purpose which, from day to day, received strength and vigour. By the operation of such high influences he was more and more withdrawn from the world and its vanities. Meanwhile, in his father's house, the world and its allurements almost perpetually presided. It was a place of gaiety, where the learned and the wealthy and the powerful assembled, and the bribes and temptations of

society were continually obtruded on the nascent appetite. Conditions so alien to his state of sentiment alarmed Savonarola into a conviction of the necessity of retreating from its seductions. But such a conviction, from the circumstances in which he was placed, could only be nursed in solitude. How could he dare to tell his father, whose kindness was evidently prerogative, that it was impossible for him to enjoy, under the paternal roof, that communion with his Lord which was necessary to his health and happiness? Family prophets are never much endured: —by parents, their interference is felt as ingratitude and presumption; by companions, as estrangement and affectation.

It must be confessed, too, that in this state of mind, under such circumstances, the natural affections do suffer considerable violation. Such conduct needs a justifying apology. None is sufficient which comes short of supposing a special call by God himself appointing the individual to a special office;—a call of which, however, only the individual is audient, and the evidence must be left entirely to his own conscience. The witness of the Divine Spirit none knoweth save the recipient; and even he knoweth it in a manner so mysterious, that, in no instance, has a satisfactory account been rendered to any but those who are similarly influenced. The sincerity of the conviction can only be historically tested by the general course of action—by the persevering exercise of a mission to the world—and by its ultimate success, either in the person of the individual himself, or in that of his successors in the like office.

The mental struggles of Savonarola were overwhelming and incessant, and suffered, as they were, in privacy, at last became intolerable. Having formed his determination, he now awaited the opportunity of

putting it into speedy effect. This was given to him in the year 1475, on the occasion of one of those solemnities which are so numerous in Italy.

We have already learned what was the state of the Italian church in the childhood of Savonarola—what is it now in his manhood? Fourteen years had elapsed since the canonization of Catharine of Sienna—how had they been occupied?

Roused from the consideration of the intestine differences, to activity against the foreign foes of Christendom, Pius II., in consistory, was driven to propose himself marching in person against the Turks, who were then devastating province after province, and thus to invite Christian monarchs, not so much by words as by deeds, to follow in defence of the Church. The spectacle of an infirm old man advancing to such a war would, he thought, awaken them to a sense of shame from the apathy in which they had so long indulged. 'Not,' said he, 'that we propose to draw the sword, a task incompatible with our bodily feebleness and sacerdotal character; but after the example of the Holy Father Moses, who prayed on the mountain, even while Israel was fighting with the Amalekites, we shall stand on some lofty galley or mountain's brow, and holding before our eyes the Holy Divine Eucharist, which is our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall implore Him to grant safety and victory to our contending armies.' Preceded by the cardinal of St. Angelo, an old and zealous prelate, Pius II. was, soon after this address, conveyed in a litter, enfeebled by sickness, to the camp at Ancona, and there patiently awaited the arrival of maritime succours which the Venetians had engaged to furnish. At length, the promised galleys arrived, but their white sails had no sooner become visible than the Pontiff expired. The multitude by whom he had been surrounded, numerous

but ill-conditioned, imperfectly armed, without resources, without discipline, nay, without enthusiasm, had been assembled from various and distant regions, only to witness the death of one distinguished man, and augment his funeral procession.

Paul II., who succeeded him, imperious and vain, pompous and frivolous,—a Venetian, and therefore peculiarly empowered to resist the Turkish aggression—was, nevertheless, so perverted by pontifical prejudices, that he neglected the prosecution of the war abroad for the persecution of heresy at home. To Corvinus, king of Hungary, he gave the crown of Bohemia on condition of his exterminating the Hüssites. He attempted the suppression of a literary society at Rome, declaring that 'the terms studious and heretical were synonymous;' and carefully impressing upon his subjects the advantages of ignorance. Acting upon these opinions, he put several persons of literary and moral reputation to the rack —one Agostino Campino died under the torture. Notwithstanding, however, this sanguinary show of zeal, Paul II. cared not for the Church, the interests of which all along he subjected to his own, hoarding, through mere love of gold, great treasures, in possession of which he died in 1471. In the year preceding, urged by avarice, and expecting to reap the benefit of his wrong, he had increased an ecclesiastical abuse by reducing once more the interval between the celebration of the jubilee, changing it from thirty-three to twenty-five years. Thus the year 1475 became a year of Jubilee, Rome being then under the pontificate of Sixtus IV. formerly a Franciscan monk.

It must be confessed that there was nothing in the events of the time to reconcile the mind and heart of Savonarola with the world. In a monastic cell might be cherished that piety of which even the church at

large had neglected the practice. Savonarola had given vent to his feelings concerning both in two canzoni, one entitled "De Ruina Mundi," written in 1472, and the other "De Ruina Ecclesiæ," written in 1475. These, though fine, are long and elaborate compositions. The more internal sentiments of his heart are very sweetly expressed in the following lyric:—

HYMN TO INFLAME THE HEART TO DIVINE LOVE.

HEART! no more delaying!
Heart! no more delaying!
From Love Divine thus straying!

Love—Jesus Christ—receiveth,
And joyfully inflameth,
To glad the heart that griéveth;
Himself in prayer still nameth,
Yet quickeneth what he claimeth,
The Serpent Error slaying.

When thou affliction bearest,
He thy sweet guardian proveth,
Thy shore where peace is nearest,
Thy port which joy most loveth;
And thee to cheer still moveth,
His love still more bewraying.

Thine own, my Heart! be never,
Wouldst thou repose secure thee—
In Jesus rest for ever!
Let not the false world lure thee;
Whom it delights, assure thee,
The Lord is he betraying.

If thou on earth dependest,
Life makest thou bitter to thee,
Wooest strife that ne'er thou endest
For peace that ne'er will woo thee.
Would'st happy life? O sue thee
In Light Divine arraying!

Trust not on earth aught human,
What's earthly will deceive thee.—
Seek thou the Heavenly True Man,
Him who will never leave thee,
Whose griefs of thine bereave thee,
To thee his joys conveying.

While humbly thou adorest,
He willingly is granting
Whatever thou implorest;—
Confess to him thy wanting,
Unto thy wounds, while panting,
The balsam he is laying.

Comest thou to him, embrace thou
And kiss in veneration
His hands and feet; so trace thou
The saint's humiliation,
While to thy admiration
His mercies he's displaying.

When once thy hand he taketh,
'Tis clasp'd in his for ever;
His friend he ne'er forsaketh:
With him, or nigh him, never
From thee shall pleasure sever,
All fear and anguish fraying.

My Heart! oh haste to Jesus!
Leave men to their disputing—
His Love alone can please us,
To calm the storm transmuting;
His Love we'll prove how suiting,
The world's dread fury staying.

Bring arms—your weapons bring ye—
Ye foes of ruth! though sadness,
Though strength and terror cling ye,
No more I fear your madness!
Grief is the heart's true gladness,
From Love Divine not straying.

Heart! no more delaying!
Heart! no more delaying!
From Love Divine thus straying!

Having determined to quit Ferrara secretly, Savonarola made preparations for effecting his purpose during the time of the solemn festival held in honour of St. George, the patron of the city. On such illustrious occasions, there are gorgeous processions of priests and singers, canons and musicians, and masked men and women, and boys with censers of incense, dignitaries and ennobled persons attendant upon crosses and statues of saint and confessor, and images of angel and archangel, of virgin and child, with the bishop majestically bearing the consecrated host, a visible god, for the worship of a superstitious and idolatrous populace. Nor are more worldly amusements wanting; the splendours of the opera, the passions and humours of the theatre, the drolleries of punchinello, the vulgar pleasures of houses of gross entertainment—with licence and misrule abroad in the public streets, or more retired revelling concealed in the haunts of dissipation—all designed to make the holy profane enough for the crowd whose appetites are their only deities. This ended, the gorged and flown multitude hasten from their various sports to the church, where they confess all the sins they have committed during the festive period just closed.

The bustle of the public games, and the magnificence of the religious spectacles, would engage so much the attention of his father and friends, that Savonarola knew his absence could not be remarked until it would be too late for them to overtake the fugitive, or interpose remonstrances between his purpose and its execution. On the 24th of April, 1475, he found safe refuge in a Dominican monastery at Bologna, as a candidate for the vows.

Next day he wrote the following letter to his father:

'My honoured father. I doubt not that you grieve much for my departure, and the more because I left you

secretly; but I wish you to learn my mind and intention from this letter, that you may be consoled, and understand that I have not taken this step so childishly as some think. And first; I beg of you as of one who rightly estimates temporal things, that you will be a follower of truth, rather than of passion, like a woman, and that you will judge according to the dictates of reason whether I ought to fly from the world, and execute this my thought and purpose. The reason which induces me to become a monk is this; in the first place, the great wretchedness of the world, the iniquity of men, the violence, the adultery, the theft, the pride, the idolatry, the hateful blasphemy into which this age has fallen, so that one can no longer find a righteous man. For this, many times a-day with tears I chaunted this verse: 'Heu, fuge crudeles terras, fuge litus avarum[1].' And this because I could not endure the great distemper of some of the people in Italy; the more also, seeing virtue extinct, ruined, and vice triumphant: this was the greatest suffering I could have in this world: therefore, daily I entreated of my Lord Jesus Christ, that he would rescue me from this defilement. Continually I made my prayer with the greatest devotion, imploring God, saying 'Show me thy path, for to Thee do I lift up mine eyes.'

'Now God has been pleased in his infinite mercy to show it me, and I have received it, though unworthy of such grace. Answer me then, is it not well that a man should fly from the iniquity and filth of this wretched world, if he would live like a rational being, and not like a beast among swine? Indeed, would it not have been most ungrateful, if having asked God to show me the straight path in which I should walk, when He deigned to point it out to me I had not taken it? Oh! my Saviour,

[1] 'Alas! fly the cruel earth, fly the greedy shores!'

rather a thousand deaths, than that I should be so ungrateful, or so oppose thy will.

'Then, dearest Father, you have rather to thank our Jesus than to weep; he gave you a son, and has not only preserved him in some measure from evil for twenty-two years, but has vouchsafed to choose him for his soldier. Alas! do you not consider it a great blessing to have a son become so easily a soldier of Christ? Either you love me or you do not; well, I know you will not say you do not love me; if then you love me, as I have two parts, my soul and my body, do you most love my soul or my body? You cannot answer, my body, for then your affection would not be for me, but for the meanest part of me; if then you love my soul best, do you not seek the welfare of my soul? Thus, you should rejoice and exalt in this triumph. Nevertheless, I consider it cannot be, but that the flesh will grieve, although it should be restrained by reason, especially in wise and magnanimous men like yourself. Do you not think it is a great affliction to me to be separated from you? Yes, indeed, believe me, never since I was born had I such sorrow and anguish of mind as in abandoning my own father, and going among strangers to sacrifice my body to Jesus, and to give up my own will into the hands of those I knew not. But afterwards reflecting on what God is, and that He does not disdain to make of us poor worms his ministers, I could not have been so daring, as not to yield to that kind voice, especially to my Lord Jesus, who says 'Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.' Because I know you lament that I left you secretly almost as a fugitive, let me tell you that such was my distress and the agitation of my inmost soul at quitting you,

that if I had expressed it, I verily believe before I could have departed from you my heart would have broken, and I should have changed my purpose and resolution; therefore do not wonder that I did not tell you. It is true, I left behind the books which are propped up against the window, certain writings which give you an account of my proceedings—I beg you then, dearest father, cease to weep, give me not more sadness and grief than I have: not of regret for what I have done (for indeed I would not revoke that, though I expected to become greater than Cesar Augustus), but because I am of flesh, as you are, and sense resists reason, and I must maintain a cruel warfare, that the devil may not get the better of me, particularly when I feel for you. Soon will these days pass, in which the misery is present to us, and afterwards I trust both you and I shall be consoled in this world by grace, and in the next by glory. Nothing remains, but that I request you with manly fortitude to comfort my Mother, of whom I beg, that together with you she will bestow her blessing on me, and I will ever pray fervently for your souls.

'GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA,

'YOUR SON.

'*Bologna,*
April 25th, 1475.'

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA.

BOOK THE SECOND.

Doctrine.

‘ Pace nón tròvo, e nón hò da far guèrra;
E témo, e spèro, ed ardo, e són un ghiaccio;
E vólo sópra ’l cièlo, e giaccio in tèrra;
E nulla stringo, e tutto ’l móndo abbraccio.’

FRANCESCO PETRARCA.

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA.

CHAPTER I.

SAVONAROLA A LAY-BROTHER.

Savonarola in the monastery employed in teaching the Scholastic Philosophy—Studies Jerome, Augustine, and Cassian—Hesitates to accept priest's orders—His probable reasons — Augustine's doctrines — Primitive idea of the Church—Savonarola and Luther contrasted.

SAVONAROLA was in the twenty-third year of his age when he entered the Dominican Monastery at Bologna. The young Bolognese, named Ludovico, was the companion of his flight. Savonarola's desires were modestly confined to the humble privileges belonging to a lay brother of the Order. He was willing to occupy himself in cultivating the garden, mending the clothes of the monks, and in domestic services, requesting in return permission to live a life of simplicity and devotion. The superiors of the institution, however, appointed him to more than this,—availing themselves to the utmost of the learning he had acquired. In a word, he was employed in teaching metaphysics and natural philosophy. The cloister was the world of Aristotle and the scholastic science, and he was expected to exhibit here the fruits of his former researches.

Many weary years were spent in this occupation, which, however, was soon felt by Savonarola as not exactly the object for which he had renounced the world. The voice that his soul had heard indicated a higher, holier vocation. He resorted accordingly to profounder meditations. In the writings of Jerome, Augustine, and Cassian, he sought confirmation of his faith. They were eminently calculated to introduce the mind of Savonarola to an apprehension of the internal evidences of religion, and the more hidden meaning of Holy Writ. The Bible, indeed, by much reading, he almost knew by rote. Thereto he added prayer, by means of which, in his lonely cell, he learned more and more of the attributes of the Divine Majesty, and of the nature of his commands to fallen man. A German biographer describes Savonarola's temperament as the sanguine-choleric—equally susceptible of hope and anger. The undefiled conscience expects in the world of man and nature answerable purity, and we may understand the kind and degree of wrath which would be felt by Savonarola, when he discovered that the members of the fraternity he had entered were as much estranged from the principles that animated him as was the world he had abandoned. He found that their conduct was as much opposed to the precepts of the New Testament as to the state of his own feelings. They were in antagonism both to the written and unwritten revelation, which he acknowledged as consenting oracles of the same Divine Truth. He had to reconcile both, with what he had experienced of the providential government of the universe. Had he erred in his interpretation of either?

Such were some of the important considerations that induced Savonarola to pause before he accepted the office of the priesthood. In fact, he hesitated long. He had received a call to a pious life, and yet

he wished to remain a lay-teacher. It is evident that he was so little pleased with the Clergy, with whom he was acquainted, that he had no desire to receive ordination at their hands—perhaps, might even have doubted its validity. Above all, as is proved by his conduct then and subsequently, he was solicitous to preserve for himself to the fullest extent both liberty of conscience and freedom of opinion. This is a point which ought not to be concealed, any more than the small reverence for the ministers or external rites of the visible church which he dared, in an age of corruption, to entertain. 'Would you have your son a wicked man,' he was wont to say,—'make him a priest;—O, how much poison will he swallow!' At other times, he alleged that he had 'found no gospel, commanding that we should keep in the Church crosses of gold, or silver, or other precious things; but he had found in the gospel, 'I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink.'' 'God,' he said, 'will take away the mitres, the hats, the jurisdiction of the prelates,' and gave as his reason, that while he and those who acted with him 'lived like Christians, the prelates of the Church of Rome lived like pagans.' His tendencies, in fine, were all favourable to a purely personal, rather than to a ceremonial religion. Even organs and scientific singing were displeasing to him—'they were introduced into the Church,' he said, 'by the devil, to prevent mental devotion, and delighted the senses without producing spiritual fruits.' Nor had he any very great faith in the catholicity of the Church of Rome. 'To the Catholic Church,' he exclaimed, 'I speak thus, Thou art Peter! But as to what constitutes the Catholic Church, there are various opinions among theologians. We will put aside the dispute and say this:—strictly speaking, the Catholic Church consists of those

Christians who live good lives and have the grace of God. Less accurately, it consists of those who only possess the faith; but to explain what the Catholic Church is, I ever refer to Christ and to the decision of the Church.'

Such were the opinions of Savonarola, which afterwards he boldly expressed when he became a priest. Heretical as they may appear, endeavours have been made by apologists to bring them within the pale of Roman orthodoxy. The chief of these, Neri, defends Savonarola at great length, and interprets such and similar passages in the manner he thought best calculated at once to conciliate the Church, and to rescue the memory of his client from the calumnious patronage of 'that rascal Luther,' who had (as already mentioned) associated the name of Savonarola with that of John of Hüss and Jerome of Prague among the martyrs of Protestantism. Nor must we overlook the fact that such opinions were not inconsistent with patristic precedent and authority, nor with the course of study which Savonarola had pursued.

It becomes, therefore, an interesting enquiry, to ascertain how far the learning of Jerome, the genius of Augustine, and the judgment of Cassian were responsible for the opinions of Savonarola?

Cassian, a native of Syria, was the founder of that moderate system of doctrines, since termed semi-Pelagianism, which, together with that of Pelagius himself and his followers, was resisted by Augustine. The root of Pelagianism is to be found in the doctrine that ascribes a self-determining free-will to man, irrespective of divine grace, in order to goodness; the ramifications are contained in the following list of errors charged against Celestius, the associate of Pelagius, and which were condemned in a council held at Carthage in the year 412.—First, that Adam was created mortal, and would have died, whether he

had sinned or not; 2. that the sin of Adam injured himself alone, not the human race; 3. that infants, at their birth, are in the condition of Adam before his sin; 4. that neither the death nor sin of Adam is the cause of man's mortality, nor the resurrection of Christ of his resurrection; 5. that man may be saved by the law as well as by the Gospel; 6. that before the coming of Christ there had been men without sin; 7. that infants inherit eternal life without Baptism. The words free-will and grace, however, had not, up to this date, appeared in the controversy. But when Augustine took part in it they soon began to appear. Augustine had to argue that the internal and immediate operation of the Holy Spirit is necessary, both to awaken us to religious feeling and to assist our progress in a holy life. By this course of argument his mind was elevated to the metaphysical bearings of the subject, and he ventured on some novelties which have ever since continued to agitate the Church.

The system of Cassian avoided the extremes of Pelagius on the one hand, and those of Augustine on the other. It regards with equal suspicion the assertion of man's absolute independence of Divine aid, and that which subjects him to the influence of an irresistible fatalism. This compromise, however, is as little tenable as semi-calvinism, in our own day, while the difficulties against which they were directed are now effectually met by the mere statement of the philosophical laws, according to which spirit acts on spirit, and matter on matter—the first operating by moral suasion, the latter by physical coercion. By virtue of the mutual freedom with which spirit acts on spirit, we may admit the possibility of man's frustrating the designs of God in his favour, without being driven to the absurdity of maintaining that the human will is, in such cases, stronger than the

Divine. Their voluntary concurrence is what is meant by the communion of the Holy Spirit with that of the Believer.

That election into the Church is of free unmerited grace, is the concurrent testimony of most of the Fathers; but there were others who desired to substitute some minor positions for the main proposition —to assign, in fact, reasons for the Divine purpose, which, as existing in the Divine Will, was as such above any reason that could be predicated as a distinct influence. Origen, for instance, supposed that God was regulated in his decree by reference to some good already done by the individual in a pre-existent state; and Clement of Alexandria thought that the Divine prevision of the good which such individual would do in time, was the cause of his election by God in eternity. Touching Origen, it may be doubted whether his doctrine is more than an exoteric statement of an esoteric truth; with regard to Clement, his error consists in assuming a part for the whole. St. Paul identifies in the prior unity of the Divine purpose the whole development of which it was capable, to wit, prevision of holiness, predestination to holiness, vocation, justification, and glorification. Thus it is that the worst errors of doctrinal men are, after all, no worse than partial truths; and sectarianism, however heretical, is only the maintenance of one verity at the expense of all the rest.

Among the novelties introduced by Augustine to the consideration of the Church, was his peculiar view of the Catholic doctrine of election. Previously to this it was the general belief, that the term implied no more than an admission into the visible Church militant—Augustine refined upon the doctrine, and referred it only to those who should be finally saved —those, in fact, who should constitute the invisible Church triumphant. He distinguished between one

professing believer and another, anticipating the eternal doom of each. It was this doctrine which enabled Savonarola to look beneath the gown and cowl of the priest, and see the hypocrite—to condemn the prelacy of Paganism—and to denounce many of the customs of the Church as superstitions. The question, however, may reasonably arise, whether the distinction thus instituted must not and does not always virtually obtain? Confine the election to the visible Church, and we are compelled to admit that some members of the election are holy individuals, while others are unholy; and that the latter both may and will perish everlastingly. The theory of Augustine asserts the same fact, and no more; but it endeavours to account for it by a prior and superior election into the Church invisible.

Instances of individual reprobation and election are cited from the Sacred Scriptures—such as of Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob,—but, according to the early fathers, even including Jerome, they are to be understood only as types of the synagogue and the Church, and of the younger superseding the elder dispensation. Such was also the ecclesiastical idea as held by the primitive Church. Passing from the Church to the New Testament, the same idea may doubtless be found, but not in the same exclusive manner, nor with the same intense significancy. Until interpreted by the Church, the New Testament contains no text which gives sacramental efficacy to the Church as an institution, and her sacraments themselves become such only through her own interpretation. As very properly insisted on by some modern Tractarians, there is in the New Testament, as separately considered, 'no system of doctrine'—'no proposed intermediation between the believer and the Christ, such as sacraments, ministers, rites and observances'—'nothing, indeed, of what may

be called sacramental, ecclesiastical, or mysterious in its general tone, but much that is moral, rational, elevated, impassioned.' Instead of the solemn, we find the familiar—instead of the literal, we have the symbolical—instead of the physical the mental. For the 'sacred elements of the Eucharist,' we are presented with 'the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.' Its celebration is spoken of as if it were only a simple ordinary meal, not as a special feast, having a full and awful meaning. In fine, the impression left by the New Testament on the mind is, 'not that of a priesthood and its attendant system, still less that of an established, endowed, dignified Church.' The Church that it contemplates is one into which whoever is baptized is incapable of sin, and therefore is unprovided with penitential exercises for its possible occurrence. Hence it is argued, that the Bible needs to be interpreted by the Church, in order to conform the precepts of one with the practices of the other[1].

It may seem singular at first sight that a man like Augustine, whose speculations had such a tendency to undervalue the visible institution, should have been the first to settle the question, long doubtful in the Church of Rome, concerning the assumption of the Blessed Virgin. Jerome even had feared to affirm it, but "Augustine" (says the Jesuit, Salmeron), "settled it with many arguments, by which adventure the Church hath gained this, that persuaded by his reasons she hath believed it, and celebrates it in her worship[2]." But the fact will receive an important interpretation, if we discern that by his doctrine of election, Augustine had actually translated the Church from earth into heaven, which in a figure is understood by the assumption of the Virgin.

[1] Tracts for the Times. No. 85.

[2] Salmaron's Disp. 51, in Epist. ad Rom.

Accustomed to contemplate in ecstatic vision the heavenly Jerusalem, no wonder that Savonarola was discontented when, returning to the common world, he looked down upon the earthly one, and accordingly preferred remaining a lay-brother in a religious order, to claiming a title which, in his eyes, conferred no essential distinction on the possessor. He was already a priest, and cared not to be so denominated. But the Church on earth is necessarily bound by different laws, and her members are subject to various conditions. While upon the one hand it accepts the ideal as the standard of perfection, on the other it must regard the possible as the measure of its fulfilment. While it glories, therefore, in the mind capable of the sublimest intuitions, it requires that it should condescend to the restrictions which are rendered expedient by the infirmity of weaker brethren. Hence the Church of Rome tacitly accepted the doctrines of Augustine, as perhaps necessarily implied (according to his own statement) in those which had been expressed by earlier fathers; and the Church of England has so framed her articles as to justify the glosses of the Calvinist and Arminian, and, in the present Bishop of Oxford's opinion, to permit the interpretation desired by those of the clergy who are supposed most to sympathise with what they erroneously deem the Mother-church of Christendom[3]. For it is the policy of a church to include within her

[3] "If, within certain limits, the articles may be so construed as not to force persons of a Calvinistic bias to leave the Church, I do not see why a similar licence within the same limits is not to be conceded to those whose opinions accord with those of our divines who resisted the puritanical temper of the 16th and 17th centuries; or why such persons should be forced into communion with Rome."—Bp. of Oxford's Charge, delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Oxford, May 1842.

fold the largest possible number of believers of every shade of opinion. Nor is it politic only, but right also; since exclusive views are not only extreme, but one-sided, and impair the claim of any community that adopts them, to the Catholicity which ought to be predicated of every church, that would vindicate its establishment as a national or international institution.

Savonarola, looking too exclusively upon the heavenly side of things, was not apt enough to make allowances for the imperfections that distinguish their earthly aspect. The novelty of Augustine's views also probably pleased his ardent and inventive genius, so kindred to that of the earlier saint. Both Augustine and Thomas Aquinas had held that the argument drawn from authority is weak. When the Donatists gloried in the multitude of their authors, Augustine answered, "It was a sign of a cause destitute of truth, to rely only upon the authority of many men, who may err." Whereto Salmeron, quoting him, adds, "As holiness of life purges no man from sin, so it frees no man from danger of error. Every age finds out some verities proper to itself, which the former ages were ignorant of;" or, as he has it in the margin, "every age hath its peculiar divine revelations." Thus corroborated, Savonarola probably set small store by the canon of Tertullian, that "whatever is first, is true; whatever is later, is adulterate." And it must be acknowledged that the primitive Christians were concerned chiefly in establishing a community as a visible symbol of election—their office was to initiate an historical fact: the doctrinal truth was reserved for evolution by their more intellectual followers as originally involved in that fact. On the other hand, that extreme protestantism which depends on private judgment alone, and rejects the aid of antiquity, excludes itself from all historical

evidence to soundness of Scriptural interpretation, and surrenders a great privilege, by despising the moral certainty attending the collating of Scripture with antiquity; a certainty which, in subjects that by their nature are not susceptible of mathematical demonstration, is the highest attainable, unless, indeed, revealed truth be brought to the individual by direct inspiration. To which may be added what the late Mr. Coleridge has said upon this very point—'That Chillingworth's position, that the mere text of the Bible is the sole and exclusive ground of Christian faith and practice, is quite untenable against the Romanists. It entirely destroys the conditions of a church, of an authority residing in a religious community, and all that holy sense of brotherhood which is so sublime and consolatory to a meditative Christian[4].'

The protestant who practically and thoroughly carries out the right of private judgment, undertakes a great responsibility. To him the ministers of the Church in which he has been baptized are neither mediators nor priests; but he stands face to face with time and with eternity, to make whatever he can of the things of both, and be a revelation to himself. No visible authority of interpretation, no embodied agent of absolution, no temporal head of religious opinion, no judge, no advocate, no daysman between him and his Saviour; he stands forth, stript in the arena, valued more for what he is than for what he has—if a layman; or—if a professional man—the office to which he would pretend, or may have been appointed. For an individual undertaking this responsibility, it is desirable that he should have been well—nay even normally educated; it is expedient that he should be a man of genius; it is necessary that

[4] Table Talk, p. 240. vol. I. 1st ed.

he should be emphatically a temple of the Holy Spirit. In a word, that he should really be in that state of divine illumination which has always been claimed as a special gift by the professed mystic.

These considerations will help us in picturing to our mind Savonarola, during this period of transition, occupied intently in the perusal of the works of Augustine, and, in anticipation of Calvin, but under far other circumstances, generating republican notions of Church government in the very bosom of a pseudo-theocracy. We may image him glowing with admiration of the celebrated Father, who by his victory over the sect of the Donatists, had deserved so well of the Church universal—but his warmest sympathy would be rendered to the poetic spirit, that sufficed to subdue the original repugnance of Augustine to all study, and presented him as it were with a magic key, whereby the gate of learning was ultimately opened to him, not only with facility but delight. On his early Manichean heresies and his subsequent return to Catholic communion, Savonarola doubtless lingered with some interest;—but it was by the splendid results of Augustine's eloquence, which, while he was yet a presbyter, persuaded the people to abandon the hereditary practice of accompanying the Christian Agapæ with unseemly revelry and pagan additions, that Savonarola would be most strongly attracted. He wondered not at its subsequent triumphs over the Manichean and Donatist heresies.

But whatever glory might accrue from these controversies, it faded utterly before the importance that attached to the dispute between Augustine and Pelagius, Celestius, Julian, and their followers. Against these he had to defend the following great doctrines:—1. That the grace of God is given independently of man's merits.—2. That whatever may be the comparative righteousness of any one particular man, no

person lives in this corruptible body without incurring the actual guilt of a certain degree of positive sinfulness.—3. That we are all born obnoxious to the sin of the first man; and, consequently, are all subjected to damnation, unless the guilt which is contracted in our generation, be removed by our regeneration. In defending these points, he contended that the Catholic Church had always held the allied doctrines of original sin and unmerited grace. As he warmed in the argument, he first struck out the novel idea of election, which subsequently received from him elaborate development in his treatise on 'Correction and Grace,' and which ultimately was adopted by Calvin.

The discrepancy between the tenets of Augustine and Calvin, are only apparent and verbal. Both hold the doctrine of predestination—without prevision or reference to pre-existence—in both its branches; both hold, too, the doctrine of particular redemption, and the final perseverance of the elect; but in regard to the doctrine of regeneration, they express themselves differently. Calvin attached to the term regeneration a sense not intended by Augustine:—namely, 'a moral change of disposition superadded to a federal change of condition.' This moral change Augustine distinguished by another term;—to wit, conversion. Both agree in the doctrine, that long after infant baptism, a moral change or conversion of the heart is possible to the adult. Augustine goes the extent of adding, that it is impossible to the infant.

Strange it is, that writers who perceive readily enough that this disparity between Augustine and Calvin is mainly verbal, should not be likewise able to perceive, that the difference between Augustine and the Primitive Fathers is also of the same character. For what is the patristic doctrine, reduced to a convenient formula, but this? that though all be-

lievers are *redeemed*, yet all believers are not *saved*. If the Church, therefore, held not the doctrine of particular redemption, she did hold virtually that of particular salvation; and this is all that is meant by either Augustine or Calvin. True, she was silent upon the point, but Augustine drew no dishonest inference, as is pretended, in interpreting her silence into consent. She admitted the fact, if she did not avouch the doctrine. The expressed doctrine itself Augustine claims as the discovery of his own genius—as a personal revelation. In writing to the objectors Prosper and Hilary, he recommends prayer as the means of obtaining the like revelation. Both he and the Church had yet to learn that its peculiar revelations were denied to any age—that a theological discovery was impossible—or that the priest who exercised his genius in the service of religion was a traitor to his order.

There is then, first, an election from out the world —next an election from out the visible Church—the first a matter of history, the second unsusceptible of historical statement. This is the reason why the patristic divines before Augustine are silent on it—they dealt with historical facts; for the philosophical truth which the fact represented, the philosopher was required, and to him when he appeared it was *revealed*.

It was, however, as we have seen, always necessarily implied, and perhaps it is assuming too little to concede, that it was *only* implied—at any rate, such utter silence cannot be predicated of the Scriptures, new or old. The fathers confess, that according to holy writ, election was made of some individuals—but pretend that they were elected as types, thus illogically reviving the defunct argument of prevision. Not because they were to be types of future Churches, but because of the absolute will of God were they

elected, or pretermitted. For "it is written, Jacob have I *loved*, but Esau have I *hated*." Whether then the election of such individuals related to their redemption only, or their salvation also, it was purely personal, and of free grace.

Moreover, when we consider what the divine Being and Purpose in dispute are, we shall find that neither the doctrine of pre-existence nor prevision can have any logical right to the prothetic place in the argument. What can precede an Eternal Purpose? To an Eternal Being must not all creation and time be present at once, and prescience therefore be altogether transcended by prehension? In this sense—the doctrine of predestination becomes identical with that of Divine providence, which never forsakes the works of the Divine Creator: and the question, whether redemption be general or particular, is the same with that of a general or particular providence. God, in the exercise of his infinite love, raises up in all times and all places, inspired persons, who live to exemplify his mercy, for their own benefit and that of others. Such are themselves redeemed from the world, and exist for the world's redemption; to wit,—for its restoration into its original state, when the church and the world were co-extensive. The whole is prior to its parts, but separation being made, reunion is effected by the gradual collection of the parts into the whole—i. e. proceeds from one to many, from many to all, which all was originally one—as in Adam, and in the family of Noah.

Though contending that 'all the members of the elect Catholic Church, inasmuch as they are the component parts of the election, constitute individually the elect people of God,' the patristic divines before Augustine conceded to the Deity the right and power of saving whom He willed, directly and immediately,

among the heathen, without reference to the Church, and although such heathen had never been privileged to hear the name of the Redeemer of men. The Augustinian divines insist on granting the Deity the same right and power, as well *in* as *out* of the Church, contending that in the former case the predestination to life is as direct and immediate as in the latter. According to both, when interpreted fairly, the redemption is to all mankind, though salvation is realized only by some. 'Many, both in the Church and the World, are called—but few chosen.' The real question relates only to the necessary intervention of the priesthood, in regard to the Church—and against this the peculiar tone of the New Testament is confessedly directed.

From what has been stated, the rationalè of the doctrine, when thoroughly conceived in the integrity of Catholic truth, appears to be this:—The visible Church included at the beginning the whole of the human race—in process of time individuals, and at length the general body of mankind, apostatized from truth and justice. Nevertheless, God has always had on earth his witnesses, many or few. Every where 'wisdom has entered into holy souls and made them friends of God and prophets.'—Such individuals, justly considered the elect among men, both by precept and example, have induced others to unite in religious community. Thus Abraham and his family laid the foundations of a Church,—not existing for the exclusive advantage of its members, but for that of the race; for, as was said by Cyril of Alexandria, 'the election of the Hebrews is the calling of the Gentiles.' When this Church, (being subject to a like apostasy as the original one) fell into decay, the process recommenced in a new but similar series, which has not yet come to an end. Now the recondite possibility of the whole process lies in the assumption,

that, at any time and in any place, when wanted, one or more of these gifted initiators of a new or revived institution or doctrine may, and will rise up from among the vulgar mass of mankind, and, inspired by God, set a better example than that to which men had been ordinarily accustomed. But as it lies in the will of God to call such as shall fraternize with those who follow the good example when set, so likewise it lies in the will of God to ordain afterward and ultimately, who shall realize the character and conduct thereby required; in the latter case a special inspiration is of necessity assumed.

That revelation which Augustine fearlessly participated with the earliest apostles, we must not be surprised if we discover Savonarola deeming it no robbery to partake. Having also been distinctly taught an absolute submission to the merciful sovereignty of God —and entertaining a strong feeling of gratitude to Divine love, which had consecrated him for one of his elect; he was prepared to contend that, not because of any prevision of man's fitness or worthiness—not because of any pre-existent virtue (except indeed His in whom alone God loved the world, and who is himself both God and Man)—but only because of God's sovereign will, and wisdom, and mercy—are either societies or individuals chosen to be the educators or foster-gods of the human family.

The conduct and fortune of Savonarola on being admitted to the monastery at Bologna, singularly contrasts with that of Luther when accepted at the convent of Erfurth. Luther went as a student, and was aggrieved at being compelled to pass his novitiate as a servant—Savonarola preferred the office of a servant; but the superiors of his convent elevated him to the rank of a teacher. There were differences, doubtless, in the discipline of the two establishments —there were also manifest differences in the temper

of the two men. The apprenticeship however that each served, was suited to the design of Providence in regard to his calling and election. Both agreed in a like estimation of the writings of Augustine, and equally felt to the inmost core a sense of human corruption and divine grace.

CHAPTER II.

SAVONAROLA A PRIEST.

Savonarola always a Reformer—Extracts from his earliest poems—Monastic, not Christian, life—Old and New Testaments—Church authority and the Bible—Digression on Chillingworth—Who are Apostles in the priesthood?—True Catholic Apostolicity—Extract from Savonarola's 'Trion della Croce'—Prayer—Meritorious obedience—Power of his conversation—Penitent Soldiers—Preaches first in the church of Lorenzo at Florence—Returns to his monastery.

SEVEN years were passed by Savonarola in his lay novitiate, travelling from place to place by the direction of his order, and teaching from cloister to cloister. It has been already shown that the foundations of each monastic establishment were the need and wish for the reformation of manners—they became the nurseries for the reformation of doctrines. Savonarola was in spirit a Reformer long before he sought admittance into the monastery—he desired reform for the world, for his family, for himself. Himself? Herein lay the source of his feeling the need, and desiring reform for the Church. By self-examination he had gained an intuition of that inner world, to the idea of which it was the duty of the Church to give bodily expression. How soon he passed on to the natural inference is evidenced by the two Canzoni, to which allusion has already been made—De Ruina Mundi, written in 1472; and De Ruina Ecclesiæ, written in 1475; poems having a double inte-

rest, as being the only extant examples of his poetical essays previous to his entering the monastic life, and as showing the inmost state of his religious feeling, and by what bonds he was connected, both with the Church and the World.

Let us collect together some scattered lines of these—the whole being too long, and indeed any separate entire paragraph inconvenient for quotation.

'Not only all virtue and good morals, but even shame has disappeared before the prevalence of vice; nay, vice being practised with cunning, attains in the world honour and distinction, while virtue starves, and the scorn of it receives reward. Luxury is the philosophy of the day. They who walk on the straight path are esteemed fools.'

'The old chaste time of the first Church has departed. Rome, polluted with all vices, rushes on towards a second fall. But to denounce her condition, is only to excite fruitless enmity. Nothing then remains, but to lament silently, and to hold fast the hope of a better future.'

One stanza in the original, from the latter piece, may serve as a profitable example.

'Di poi, Madonna, dissi: se'l vi piace
Che con voi pianga, l'alma si contenta:
Qual forza vi ha cosi del regno spenta?
Qual arrogante rompe vostra pace?
Rispose suspirando: Una fallace,
Superba meretrice Babilonia.
Ed io: Deh per Dio, Donna,
Se rompersi potria quelle grande ale?
E lei: Lingua mortale
Non può, nè lice, non che muover l'arme.
Tu, piangi e taci: e questo meglio parme[1].'

[1] Then, I exclaimed:—Madonna! should she please,
Weep I with thee, my soul will be contented—
What power has quenched thy own, thy reign tormented?

Perhaps, Savonarola thought that institutions which reformers had founded, would prove the most fitting shelter for congenial spirits. If such had been his expectation, he was not long ere he experienced disappointment. The course which his studies were taking, was calculated to make him less and less contented with the actual condition of monastic establishments in his time. The task of lecturing, to which he had been appointed, he diligently pursued, and was so successful in its exercise, that he attracted and attached many scholars. But the subject of his discourse caused him to refer for illustration to the 'Lives of the Old Fathers,' and the 'Meditations' of Augustine, and the 'Collationes Patrum' of Cassian, and by these sources of information his conscience was so enlightened, that it might not contemplate with any satisfaction, the deficiencies and darkness of the mode of life wherewith he had now become intimately acquainted. He still continued his study of Thomas Aquinas, nay, studied him with greater intensity than ever, confessing that he received more profit and delight from the clearness and profundity of this theologian, than from the speculative ingenuity of any philosopher, not even excepting Plato, of whom he now began to entertain a lower regard than formerly, condemning, indeed, the opinion which held him of 'divine' authority, as an error of the age. But the 'angelic' theologian was his master; him he reverenced, and in reading his works always felt humiliation, as in the presence of a superior intellect.

What arrogance now violates thy peace?
She answers sighing—Falsehood mars my ease—
Proud meretricious Babylon's oppression.
And I: Ah! but such huge transgression
That, by God's aid, I, Lady! might diminish!
Then she: Such speech must finish;
Not lawful aught that moves to insurrection—
Thou—weep in silence; 'tis thy best protection!

But whatever might be the relative estimation in which he held his favourite authors, they combined to form in his mind a standard, that alike condemned the customs of every cloister he visited, where he failed to find the example he sought of that elevation and simplicity which rightly belong to the Christian life, and ever accompany it when manifested in its native purity.

Further progress yet awaited him. At length his books ceased to charm—his soul ceased to affect the food presented by the current religious treatises. Nothing would satisfy him but the sacred Scriptures themselves—therein he wished to lay sure the foundations of his belief and practice. Henceforth to study them—to obey them—to solve whatever difficulties might be contained in them, and to apply the results to his conscience, became the chief occupation of his existence. He held them in the highest honour, treated them with enthusiastic reverence, and was forward to acknowledge that his gratitude was due to them for all his light, his consolation, and better tendencies. Nor was his reading confined to the New Testament—he had indeed great partiality for the Old.

The brothers of his order were surprised at this predilection of Savonarola for a book which had fallen into such neglect in the seats of religion;—most of all, they wondered at the great attention and regard which he paid to the more ancient writings.

'Why,' demanded the monks of Savonarola, 'do you study the Old Testament? Surely it is of no use to go over again the past, and perplex our minds with the understanding of fulfilled histories?'

To this question Savonarola replied by another—

'For what purpose then has God preserved these writings? and why have the fathers of the Church equally expounded the Old Testament and the New,

and recognized the inter-dependency of the one with the other?'

Not a reason for study, but an excuse for their indolence, was what the monks had desired—so they left Savonarola unanswered, and the Scriptures unread. Can we wonder at the ultimate reaction in favour of the Bible, as opposed to the Church, when the Church had so long practically resigned her gift of interpretation, and abandoned her evidences to oblivion? She had already been guilty of one extreme, and the equilibrium had no chance of restoration without the assertion of another.

The assumption of the Church's authority had come to be used only as an apology for the habit of adopting religious opinions or pious practices, without examination. It served as a plea for the inconsiderate, and saved the indolent the trouble of reflection.

Thus, as is observed by Chillingworth, the Church in time resembled a 'company of blind men, presuming to judge of colours, or the choice of a way —for every unconsidering man is blind in that which he does not consider—all of whom, either out of idleness refused the trouble of a severe trial of their religion (as if heaven were not worth it), or out of superstition feared the event of such a trial, that they might be scrupled, or staggered, or disquieted by it; and therefore, for the most part, did it not at all: or if they did it, they did it negligently and hypocritically, and perfunctorily, rather for the satisfaction of others than themselves; but certainly without indifference, without liberty of judgment, without a resolution to doubt of it, if upon examination the grounds of it proved uncertain, or to leave it, if they proved apparently false.' Such was the decision of Chillingworth, such was the experience of Luther in the convent of Erfurth—such that of Savonarola in the different Dominican cloisters in which he sojourned.

Now mark the logical conclusion from this experience. Granting that the historical succession of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, in the Church of Rome is what was intended by the apostle to the Ephesians, we are compelled to ask, where are the extraordinary powers and supernatural gifts which are predicated of such in the New Testament, and how are they manifested in those inconsiderate and unreflecting souls, who have too frequently undertaken to minister at the Christian altar? In the want of this requisite proof, a Chillingworth may rationally, as he does actually, argue, that if God had really promised such historical succession, he would have made good his promise, which it is evident he has not done. Whereunto, says he, 'if any man except, that though the apostles and prophets, and evangelists, were extraordinary, and for the plantation of the gospel, yet pastors were ordinary and for continuance; I answer, it is true, some pastors are ordinary, and for continuance, but not such as here spoken of; not such as are endowed with the strange and heavenly gifts which Christ gave not only to his apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, but to the inferior pastors and doctors of his Church, at the first plantation of it. And therefore St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xii. 28, (to which text we are referred by the margin of the vulgar translation, for the explication of this) places this gift of teaching amongst, and prefers it before, many other miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost. Pastors there are still in the Church, but not such as Titus, and Timothy, and Apollos, and Barnabas. Not such as can justly pretend to immediate inspiration and illumination of the Holy Ghost. And, therefore, seeing there neither are, nor have been, for many ages in the Church, such apostles and prophets, &c., as here are spoken of, it is certain God promised none: or, otherwise,

we must blasphemously charge him with breach of his promise.'

Chillingworth, accordingly, again refers to the text of Scripture, in order to ascertain whether it would not bear such an interpretation as would comport with the fact as it has actually occurred. Re-examining therefore the passage (Ephes. iv. 11—13), he finds that no succession was expressed or implied—nothing more being stated than that the Redeemer had upon his ascension miraculously endowed his immediate apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—for the work of the ministry, for the consummating of the saints, for the edification of the body of Christ, till such time as all believers should be beyond the need of teaching; which work those same immediate propagandists may be said in good sense to have done, not only in their own time, but at any time afterwards, and still to do,—not in their own persons certainly, but by their writings, which are yet sufficient to preserve students from conducting themselves 'like children, wavering, and carried up and down with every wind of doctrine,' and to promote that special purpose more effectually than the dogmatic unreflecting traditionary process of the Roman communion.

Chillingworth sums up the argument in these few words:—

'The apostles and prophets, &c., that then were, do not now in their own persons, and by oral instruction, do the work of the ministry, to the intent we may be kept from wavering, and being carried up and down with every wind of doctrine; therefore they do this some other way. Now there is no other way by which they can do it but by their writings; and, therefore, by their writings they do it; therefore by their writings and believing of them, we are

to be kept from wavering in matters of faith: therefore the Scriptures of the apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, are our guides; therefore not the church of Rome.'

It was the presence and the pressure of this great fact upon their actual experience, that drove Calvin and Luther, and Savonarola, and Augustine, from the testimony of the Church to that of the Bible, interpreted by the Spirit, templed in the hearts and consciences of each, and specially illuminating them for its interpretation. Savonarola too recognized the authority of human reason in matters of faith, and thus expresses himself on the subject, in the preface to one of his works—'Trionfo della Croce.'

'Though it is a common saying, that faith has no virtue when there is a proof from human reason; (since this refers to those who otherwise would not believe, and therefore believing only because they are compelled by reason, their faith has no virtue) yet who being first enlightened by God, without other proof, embraces the faith; if he afterwards investigates the argument for it to confirm himself and others, such an one deserves praise from God and man. The prince of apostles, St. Peter, exhorting us, "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." And as in this book we mean to insist only on argument, we shall not rest upon any authority, but shall proceed in such manner as if we were not to believe any man in the world, however wise, but only our natural reason.'

Savonarola was now a priest. Cherishing the sentiments he did, it was not likely that he would depend only or mainly on his ordination rite, but rather on his personal befitting for the office. Pursuing the theory of Augustine, he would enquire not only who are the elect in the Church, but who are

the apostles in the priesthood? and would confine its validity to the chosen few, and not to the called many. He defends the reasonableness of Christianity itself, on the ground only of the genuine piety of its professors. Thus he writes—'If it appear a hard thing to believe the crucified Jesus to be God and man—reflect, if there were an error, faith in it would not be generated, nourished and increased more easily by a Christian life, than by any other. Surely, if this belief were false, its untruth could not be hidden from the holiest men, especially in their prayer and meditation on divine things! But we see that these confirm it more than all others. Were it vain, they would not have such gladness, tranquillity, and freedom of mind. Christians would not reckon tribulations among their joys and consolations. If the Christian faith produced all this without miracles, that were indeed the greatest of miracles.'

Savonarola's religious evidences were all moral and spiritual—of the historical he took little account. Nevertheless, if we examine history in the light of the evidence he adopted, we shall find that it corroborates holy writ precisely in those points, where to the merely historical enquirer the proof is defective. Thus, as we have seen, it is impossible to make out a succession of apostles in the historical chain, if confined to a particular church and system—but elevate the vision and enlarge the horizon, and immediately a different prospect is presented. Church history presents us then with a noble army of initiators, both ordained and unordained—called and chosen in both cases by direct and immediate divine inspiration. The fathers of the Vaudois in their Alpine solitudes —the protestant mountaineers in Dauphiné — the Albigeois—perhaps also the Cathari, the Gazari, Paterini, Publicani, and others—certainly Savonarola —Reuchlin—Luther—Calvin—thus all come in proof

of succession, without any need of tracing them through historical institutions to early ages. Enough, that the wind blowing where it listeth, (and no one can tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth,) had filled them with the witness of the Spirit, and given them credential of authority in the fact of their individual regeneration, to become in turn generators of communities. Always, too, pious and enthusiastic individuals have from the earliest times to the latest, and in every part of the world, and in the bosom of every Christian assembly, whether mystically disposed, or plain and literal in their faith, served as examples of righteousness, and taught the precepts of verity to their own immediate circles of neighbours or friends. Some writers, too, believe, that theosophic fraternities have at all times existed, whose history has not been written, only because it is their policy to preserve their secrets from profanation. And seeing that the orthodox faith of the primitive fathers permits us to recognize the benefits of Christ's death, as extending even to the heathen, who knew not the name of their Redeemer, and the possibility of God's grace operating to their final salvation, without the intervention either of Scripture, priest, or institution,—every person of eminent virtue, of whatever denomination, creed, complexion, or country under heaven, may be claimed as a worthy Son of the same parental Deity, who 'has made of one blood all nations of men.' The most universal acceptation then of Catholic verity will not permit us to apply the doctrine of apostolical succession in a carnal sense, and thereby limit and confine it to a semi-hereditary series of ordained persons in a Christian society or two, from among the many God has seen fit to raise up for his own good purposes, in the midst of a world lying else in moral darkness and spiritual death. Each ecclesiastical fellowship presents its own class of historical

facts, and must be included in the induction that is to corroborate the principle of perpetual apostolicity as contained in holy writ. Of these historical corroborations, the Church of Rome presents one class, the Greek Church another, the Anglican Church another, the Presbyterian Churches another, and the various sects other classes. In this point of view, we are not simply driven to Chillingworth's necessity of accepting the writings of deceased apostles for the only teachers of the will of God, but have in addition enough of living example and precept to induce us to imitation, and persuade us to believe.

Nor must we omit to number in the list of God's witnesses on earth, men of letters and masters of song, sophists and gnostics, who have at all times enriched Christendom with the gifts of genius. The Primitive unity of the Church included, as we have said, all arts and professions, which have only at a comparatively recent period become separated from the priestly office. Of old, among the Hebrews in like manner there were not only priests, but orators, wise men, and prophets. Also among the Greeks, their sages and poets have survived for the instruction of scholars in all succeeding times and countries. The influence of Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio, on modern Italy and on the mind of Savonarola, has already been specified. But perhaps an objection will be raised here, because of the variety of opinion and the infidel character of some of the writings, even of Christian authors. Let us recollect, however, that all literature agrees in one point,—its ideal tendency. Poetry, romance, and philosophy, like religion, stand in contrast with the world, and constantly rebuke its motives and conduct, by example and precept, satire or ridicule. And in regard even to works professedly atheistic, we shall find, upon a nice analysis of his production, that,

whatever the author may have meant in the wrath of his heart or the delusion of his understanding, he has been able to do no more than to bring the creeds and customs of his time to trial before the bar of his judgement, and condemn them as short of some standard of purity and excellence, wherewith he would compare them. Thus, however defaced or injured, there is in every heart a shrine of truth, from which God will not be expelled, and in which, wherever he has granted the appropriate intellect, he will make his presence felt and be confessed. For 'the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord[1].'" Also, 'There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth men understanding[2].'

Thus it is that God has sent unto his people from time to time, 'prophets and wise men and scribes[3],' though too seldom received with honour and reverence, and too frequently recompensed with obloquy, imprisonment, and martyrdom.

And what if discrepancies of opinion among this cloud of witnesses may be detected, and the nobler and the elder prove more erroneous than the meaner and the younger? 'Great men,' says Elihu, 'are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgement[4].' Even so has it fared with the chief ecclesiastical authorities; 'popes against popes, councils against councils, some fathers against others, the same fathers against themselves; a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age, the Church of one age against the Church of another age[5].' Shall then the rule of *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*[6], be put

[1] Prov. xvi. 1. [2] Job xxxii. 8.
[3] Matt. xxiii. 34. [4] Job xxxii. 9. [5] Chillingworth.
[6] 'Whatever has been believed always, everywhere, and by all.'

aside? God forbid! But it should not be carnally interpreted, as holding of time and place, and merely intending traditive interpretation. For truth is eternal, whether acknowledged or forgotten in any age, or by any people. 'The always of Divine truth,' says a defender of modern inspiration[7], 'is not the *always* of time, but of eternity: the *everywhere* is not that of space, which is finite, but of the spirit of Him who is omnipresent: and the *by all*, is not that of the many who are called, but of the few who are chosen. A truth, though only the alleged novelty of yesterday, may have in it more of durability, than a doctrine which has lasted from the time of the fall: though confined only to a single spot of earth, it may have in it more of the principle of ubiquity, than an opinion which has spread itself over the globe: though received only by one, it may have in it more of Catholicity, than an opinion which has been received by one million. Indeed, to test the eternal truth of a doctrine by the number of hours it has lasted, as counted out by the clock—the universality of its nature, by the multitude of superficial miles over which it has extended, by the decrees of human authority, or by the number of voices who have proclaimed in its favour—is to employ a test which is only worthy of that which can be so tested. Let us, then, concede to the fashions of the world, the principles of time, space, and custom; and reserve to ourselves the only characteristics of Divine truth, its intrinsic eternity, infinity and universality.'

Thus it is, that while Revelation is final, the Spirit of God is evermore discovering to individuals and to his Church, the meaning of his word, and making both practically and vitally better acquainted with himself

[7] The Rev. Augustus Clissold, M.A., formerly of Exeter College, Oxon, in a Letter to Dr. Whateley, Archbishop of Dublin.

and with Divine truth, which, in proportion as it is practical and vital, will prove itself to be productive. There is in its manifestations to man progress and developement, though in itself it remains undiminished and unincreased, immutable and infinite. Immanent in God, it grows in man with his spiritual growth, and strengthens with his spiritual strength.

Living as he did in the light of many great truths, Savonarola found it possible, while asserting his right of private judgement in regard to the Scriptures, to maintain his allegiance to the Church in which he had been educated. Nay, with the most perfect consistency he could show the deepest reverence for her origin and pretensions, and even render in his belief in some points from which the Churches of the Reformation would dissent. This will be sufficiently shown by the following curious passage from the work we lately quoted.

'It has appeared to me' (says Savonarola in the 'Trionfo della Croce' treating of the works of Christ, and desiring by means of a symbolical representation to gather them into one view)—'it has appeared to me necessary to unite all under the image of a triumphal car, in order that the meanest intellect may contemplate them all at once. First, then, let us place before our eyes a car with four wheels, and on it, Christ like a conqueror crowned with thorns and all wounded, thus showing his passion and death by which he overcame the world. Upon his head, a light like the sun, having three faces, represents the Holy Trinity, from which proceeds wonderful splendour, illuminating his human nature and the whole Church. In the left hand of Christ let there be the cross with all other instruments of his passion, and in the right, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Near his feet, place the chalice with the host, and other vases of oil and balsam with the remaining

signs of the Sacraments of the Church. Below this first rank in which Christ is, let there be the most pious Mother of God, the Virgin Mary; and upon the same elevation with her should be ranged all around vessels of gold, silver, and precious stones full of the ashes and bones of the dead. Before the car, the Apostles and Evangelists, so as to appear dragging it, preceded by the patriarchs and prophets and an innumerable throng of men and women of the Old Testament. Around the car, like a coronet, a very great multitude of martyrs, close to them the doctors of the Church with open books in their hands, and next a countless crowd of virgins adorned with lilies. Afterwards behind the car, an infinite multitude of men and women of every condition; that is, Jews, Grecians, Latins, Barbarians, rich, poor, learned, unlearned, small and great, old and young, who all with one heart praise Christ. Surrounding all these we have mentioned let us place an innumerable army of enemies and opponents of the Church of Christ, that is, emperors, kings, princes, potentates, wise men, philosophers, heretics, slaves, freemen, males, females, and people of every tongue and nation. Besides these, be there represented idols fallen and shattered, heretical books burned, all sects contrary to Christ refuted, and every other religion overthrown and condemned.'

This allegory Savonarola has not left without explanation. The Trinity, he declares, is placed at the summit, because from visible we rise to the knowledge of invisible things. The four wheels represent the four parts of the world which Christ subdues to himself. The seven sacraments are allegories, depicting the progress and adjuncts of life. Baptism is birth, confirmation growth, the Eucharist nutrition, penance medicine to heal sickness, &c. The rationality of the doctrine of the real presence is de-

fended on the ground that 'nothing is impossible with God,' and the multiplied ceremonies of the Church are vindicated by the consideration, that 'the Spirit, like a physician, prescribes remedies for the infirmities of men's minds, to whom spiritual worship becomes wearisome—slight remedies at first, while the disease is slight, but as it grows worse, they are increased. Those who will always use vocal and not mental prayer, act as if they chose to take medicine perpetually and never to be cured.' Whereupon Savonarola advises, that, 'if it happen by the grace of God, the soul unites itself with him in such love and contemplation, that vocal prayer can no longer be continued without hindering this contemplation, the suppliant should omit the remainder of his vocal and continue his mental orisons, the great object of prayer being attained by such converse with God.'

'We worship God,' continues Savonarola, 'not only to honour him, but to obtain from him our happiness. A good life being a better way of obtaining blessedness than sacrifices and ceremonies, we must allow that a good life is much more true worship than exterior worship.'

This brief passage lets in a world of light on the inner convictions of Savonarola, and enables us to look through the priest into the man.

Yet, in other passages we find him struggling with darkness; asserting for instance the tenet of meritorious obedience, in the following terms.

'True glory is to do that which thou art not obliged by any natural or divine law to do. Doubtless, it is more meritorious to observe the commandments and the councils than the commandments only.'

In his private meditations, however, we find him so far advanced in the search after personal holiness, as to lose sight of the above and other doctrines

and practices without the necessity of formal renunciation. They dropped from him as the cotyledons wither away from the unfolded flower.

Even after his priestly ordination, Savonarola continued the business of teaching. The certainty and clearness with which he treated scientific questions rendered him extremely popular. His going about from cloister to cloister made no difference in his studies, while the mildness of his manner, the fulness of his learning, and the strictness of his discipline, won for him every where love, esteem, and honour. His high character and attractive behaviour obtained him also much employment in the confessional; and so great was his influence, that in the most important, as well as the least concerns, unreserved confidence was placed in him, and his advice implicitly followed. None ventured to dispute the commands of a man at once so holy and so wise.

In private remonstrances Savonarola was singularly happy. One illustrative incident is recorded. On a voyage from Ferrara to Mantua, in company with thirteen soldiers on board the same boat, he is said to have stimulated them by the power and fervor and unction of his discourse, to a penitential confession of very many and enormous iniquities.

Instances of this kind, doubtless, led his order and himself to think that, as a preacher, Savonarola would become at once uncommonly effective. An opportunity soon occurred of making the trial.

There was in the year 1482, a war between Ferrara and Venice, the latter having, from ambition, united with the republics dependent on its government, in stirring up the pope against the former, for the purpose of ruining the house of Este. The fathers of the Dominican Order were then with Savonarola sojourning in the convent of St. Maria degli Angiola, in Ferrara, and thought it politic to

avoid the perils of war and transfer their schools to some safer locality. Savonarola and others went to Florence. Immediately after his arrival, the prior of the Convent of San Marco, Vincenzo Bardello, showed his estimate of Savonarola's talents and reputation by naming him reader; and it was arranged that in the Lent of 1483 — (the year of Luther's birth)—he should also preach the fast-day sermons.

The opportunity long looked for has at length arrived. That fountain of eloquence in the soul of Savonarola, whose living streams had flowed at the lecture-table healingly, and which had refreshed the hearts of companions and of those who came for counsel or confession in private converse, was now to be lifted up in the congregation of believers, and the preacher was to be acknowledged as the orator of salvation, the advocate for God and man. This, and no less a gift than this, was in Savonarola—assurance of it had been felt by him—the ambition for its exercise had grown with him; and now the time has come when it is to do the work for which it had been bestowed.

With hopes thus high, Savonarola ascends the pulpit in the Church of Lorenzo at Florence. The congregation is numerous, for hitherto the preachers have been sufficiently attractive, and the new preacher has much celebrity, and from him much is expected. But these hopes and expectations are premature. Savonarola has much to learn before he is perfect as an orator. A constrained carriage, an ungainly figure, a piping voice, have little to please an audience. Day after day the number of hearers diminishes—day after day—till at length only twenty-five are left including women and boys. Nor is Savonarola not aware of the cause, but has left his self-condemnation on record. 'I had,' 'he says, 'neither voice, lungs, nor style. My preach-

ing disgusted every one. I could not have moved so much as a chicken!'

He returned to his monastery with feelings that may be conceived but not described.

Must Savonarola renounce his hope? Is there no chance of his becoming even so much as useful as a preacher? Is the pulpit after all no probable stage for the exertions of a genius felt by the possessor to be of the highest order—for the overflow of an enthusiasm that is consuming his heart, wherein it had long concentrated itself, and been secretly nourished, like the seething lava beneath the crater, with materials of combustion? We shall see.

CHAPTER III.

SAVONAROLA A PREACHER.

Savonarola in Lombardy—Expounds the Apocalypse—Babylon a patristic type of Rome—Essential differences between the Gospel of Christ and the religion of Christians—Sixtus IV. and Innocent VIII.—Savonarola preaches at Brescia, and denounces impending destruction to the apostate Church of Rome—His prophetic claims—Studies and writings.

It was in the year that gave birth to Luther, when Savonarola made his first, but unsuccessful entrance into the pulpit. His eloquence, like the new-born person of the German reformer, was in its infancy, and none perceived that nevertheless 'Heaven lay about it.' Savonarola, however, was not to be discouraged. We read of his making trials in divers towns. His mind was full of truth—he was an artist, if yet a comparatively dumb one; but he could not rest without making some effort to promulge it—he must teach, if but with a stammering lip. Part of his time he spent in Lombardy, expounding to youths the Scriptures—part in making the preparatory trials just mentioned, at long and accidental intervals, and without publicity.

Sedulous as a biblical student generally, Savonarola, like most religious enthusiasts, was an ardent admirer and expounder of the Apocalypse. The divinest of poems, this work of the beloved disciple, his Lord's-day holy labour, when, islanded on solitary Patmos, the apostle was in the Spirit, and heard behind him a great voice as of a trumpet,—this marvellous prophecy has ever affected in an incomparable degree the imagination of the pious, and excited more devout emotion than any other book in the sacred volume. To the mystical mind it has always been an intense subject of meditation, the imprisoned Saint having therein assembled together all the types and symbols, contained elsewhere separately in the records of revelation, with others then for the first time conceived, making thus a grand composite revelation, inclusive of the Old and New, as the complement and supplement of both. It is as if God had made up his jewels, and set his seal upon the casket that enshrined the sacred treasures. What increases the interest also is the visionary character of the poem—the manner in which it is believed to open up the designs of Providence to the world's end—thus making the student thereof a seer into the most distant future.

There are few who even now are either willing or able to interpret the contents of the Apocalypse in a spiritual or moral sense. In a time, when to refer the mystical language of Holy Writ to invisible arcana, was to swim counter to the stream of patristic authority, what else could be expected but a substitution of one visible thing for another, as the explanation of the mystical term? If Peter (1. v. 13) greeted his correspondents with 'the salutation 'of the co-elect Church which is in Babylon,' the primitive fathers, according to Eusebius, understood him to date from Rome. However fanciful, however strained may

seem to be their solutions, they never violate this canon—never allow themselves to depart from some literal sense concerning the past, which they merely exchange for some literal sense concerning the present. Nor has an Augustine yet risen, qualified by his genius to elevate the sublime subject of the Apocalypse above the terrene level, and to translate its pro-Dantean argument into a revelation of eternity rather than of time.

Very early, then, was ancient Babylon accepted as a type of Rome, and the words of the Apocalypse were understood to refer to the corrupt and adulterated Christianity, which was so soon established in the seven-hilled city. Savonarola, boldly poetic as were his fancy and imagination, though a Reformer, was yet no innovator. He was a man of genius, but he was also a man of learning. And his learning exercised constant control upon the daring of his genius. Purely religious though he was, yet many of the superstitions of the age, as we have already seen, still clung to him: he manifested rather an instinct for the discovery, than a perfected knowledge of the truth. More should not be expected from him under all the circumstances of time and place, and the conditions which qualified his intellectual progress. No wonder, therefore, that his zeal should be fired by a never-doubted conviction that Babylon and Rome were synonymous terms. 'What is Babylon,' said Savonarola, 'but Rome? Babylon signifies confusion. There is not in the world greater confusion of crimes and all sorts of iniquity than at Rome. Since they have made it a dwelling for harlots, God will make it a stall for swine and horses!'

Alas! the fact only too strongly justified the analogy. The Church of Christ had indeed (to quote from Dr. Henry More,) 'degenerated—or rather apostatized, from the purity of the Gospel into the ab-

horred condition of anti-christianism, and yet retained the external possession of Christianity, using indeed the name and history of Christ and his Apostles, but introducing thereupon such a face of idolatry and heathenish superstition, and barbarous cruelty against the true servants of Christ, that by those whose judgements are more free and piercing, such a state of the Church cannot but be deemed rather a revival of paganism, than an *uninterrupted* succession of true Christianity in the world; or, to use the softest language that the truth of the thing will admit of, it cannot be judged pure and unadulterate Christianity, but a kind of pagano-christianism, the pagan rites, idolatries, and superstitions being practised upon Christian objects, and this paganism in this pretended Christianity being maintained with as ferine cruelty as paganism itself was in the time of the heathen emperors.' Alas! not only in appearance, as they who would accommodate the language of the New Testament to the traditions and ceremonies of the Church in one or two of its historical manifestations, would have us to believe—not only in appearance but in reality, are there great differences between the record and the institution. Moreover such differences *must* be—for the New Testament presents in all its parts the ideal of a Church, equally existing in an individual and a corporation, while the institution is fain to be content with such compromise as could be effected between the ideal and actual, under specific circumstances of time and place. Nothing can more strictly mark this than the sinless state of human perfection required of every Christian by St. John. For such an one, no special sacrifice would be required, whose life would be all one sacrifice to truth and goodness—no special sacrament needed, whose every meal would be a sacrament—no shrine or altar or sacred building wanted for his devotion, to whom

every place would be altogether holy, and no spot on earth unblessed by Him who made it. How deeply all this was felt by Savonarola, what he says in prayer sufficiently vouches. Such is the character he contemplated as becoming the Christian, and such is the character presented to us in the Gospel—a being carrying about in his person and habits of mind the most hallowed influences, and consecrating the very air in which he moves with the sanctity of his presence. But, alas! such is not man! The Christian is his highest style, but who has yet deserved it? Nominal Christianity from the first was and could only be a corruption of that which gave it birth. Nominal Christianity is not necessarily the religion of Christ—the doctrines of the scholars are not necessarily those of the master. Nominal Christianity is a system made by professed Christians, not by Christ. It follows and embodies the usages of nominal Christians, not the example of Christ. From the Church of Antioch to the present day it has been so, and could not be otherwise. The pure religion of Christ, as revealed in the New Testament, contemplates man as restored to his original purity, as incapable of sin, as a veritable child of God—but nominal Christianity has ever accommodated itself to fallen humanity, sympathized with its errors, and condescended to its infirmities. When it became joined to the world, and was taken into partnership with the state, this was more particularly the case. A more decided compromise was effected between the ideal and the possible; and at different periods and in different places, nominal Christianity has assumed different phases according to the circumstances and condition of the age and country. But no such compromise—no such accommodation is contemplated by the Gospels; on the contrary, their very spirit is directly opposed to it in every shape and in every

degree. It is of no use deceiving ourselves: for this is the case. It is not that the Gospel precepts are only apparently more pure than the practices of the Church in all times; but they are so in very deed and truth. Nor is this conclusion avoided by any necessity for supposing an antecedent institution, as at once their author and interpreter. Granted—there must have been a previous establishment virtually or actually, and acting always in both capacities. What then? The documents would aim at the same end for which the institution existed, but they would work by different means. The purpose of the institution would be to lead its members to the pursuit of the highest excellence practically; and the aim of the documents would be to hold up the standard of excellence as the object to be gained. The first would proceed by training an imperfect uninstructed individual, and providing for him means whereby he might be perfected to every good word and work; this training and preparation—these means would all be adapted to his imperfection and ignorance. The second would be limited to announcing the idea of the utmost excellence, and strictly defining its image; permitting no mutation nor mutilation, but setting aloft and apart the example to be studied, far above and beyond the mists of earthly passion and folly, in the pure ether of wisdom and goodness and power, not to be breathed by the profane, not to be invaded by the unclean. A law is always more strict in its terms than the observance of it can be; and the perfection of holiness required by the religion of Christ was never attained by mortal man. Nominal Christianity is just so much as has been realized in time and space, and no more. The religion of Christ is to be found in the New Testament—nominal Christianity in the Church, and real Antichrist in both the Church and the world; and by so much as one differs

from the other, by so much the institutions and customs of the Church differ from the religion and morality of the New Testament.

'In truth,' says the leader of the Oxford modern theological school, 'the whole course of Christianity, from the first, when we come to examine it, is but one series of troubles and disorders. Every century is like every other, and to those who live in it seems worse than all times before it. The Church is ever ailing, and lingers on in weakness, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in her body.' Religion seems ever expiring, schism dominant; the light of truth dim, its adherents scattered. The cause of Christ is ever in its last agony; as though it were but a question of time, whether it falls finally this day, or another. The saints are ever all but failing from the earth, and Christ all but coming; and thus, the day of judgement is literally ever at hand; and it is our duty ever to be looking out for it, not disappointed that we have so often said, 'now is the moment;' and that, at the last, contrary to our expectations, truth has somewhat rallied. Such is God's will, gathering in his elect, first one and then another, by little and little, in the intervals of sunshine between storm and storm, or snatching them from the surge of evil, even when the waters rage most furiously. Well may prophets cry out, 'How long will it be, O Lord, to the end of these wonders? how long will this mystery proceed? how long will this perishing world be sustained by the feeble lights which struggle for existence in its unhealthy atmosphere?' God alone knows the day and the hour when that will at length be, which he is ever threatening; meanwhile, thus much of comfort do we gain from what has been hitherto; not to despond, not to be dismayed, not to be anxious

at the troubles which encompass us. They have ever been, they ever shall be; they are our portion. 'The floods are risen, the floods have lift up their voice, the floods lift up their waves: the waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly, but yet the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier[1].'

So much by way of apology for the fact, should we find on inquiry a succession of Apostates rather than of Apostles, in the seats of ecclesiastical privilege. The pope under whom Savonarola is now living, is one of the worst that ever bore the sacred character. Sixtus IV. professed in the first instance to follow the policy of Pius II., but soon relapsed into indolence and misgovernment. The archbishop of Pisa being ignominiously executed by the Medici during the disturbances that arose between them and the Pazzi at Florence, and of which anon we shall give a full account; Sixtus IV. was compelled to place the city under an interdict, excommunicate Lorenzo de Medici, and publish a declaration of war. But his pontifical menaces were treated with scorn, even by the ecclesiastics. They continued to celebrate the divine offices in defiance of the interdict; they assembled a synod of the bishops of Tuscany, in order to appeal with greater solemnity to a general council, and retorting the blame of the original offence upon the pontiff himself, called upon France and Milan to aid them against his oppression. In the midst of the confusion external dangers were forgotten, and the hosts of Mahomet II. approached unheard to the gates of Italy. The city of Otranto was suffered to be stormed by the infidel—and then, but not till then, a peace was patched up between Florence and the pope. Mahomet dying, Sixtus IV. had thenceforth leisure to attend to his personal in-

[1] Newman's Romanism and Popular Protestantism.

terests, and carried the transgression of nepotism beyond all former example. He married one of his nephews, Leonardo della Rovera, to a natural daughter of Ferdinand of Naples, shamefully, or rather shamelessly, abandoning to that monarch some estates and fiefs which his predecessors had spared no toil acquire and retain. Another, named Julian, the same who was afterwards Julius II., was enriched with several ecclesiastical benefices. For a third, named Girolamo Riario, the principality of Imola was purchased from the resources of the apostolical treasury. But it was on Pietro Riario, the youngest, that the profusion of his fondness was principally lavished. Without talents, without virtues, from a simple Franciscan monk, Pietro was immediately elevated to the dignity of cardinal: he was made titular patriarch of Constantinople; he was raised to the archiepiscopal see of Florence; he received besides, two other archbishoprics, and a multitude of inferior benefices. In the mean time his splendid prodigality, the pride of his attendants, his equipage, and his sumptuousness, kept pace with the abundance of his resources, and he expended on the pomp of a single ceremony, or the festivities of a single night, sums which exceeded the revenues of kings. For the rest, Sixtus IV. was signally superstitious, and singularly venal, creating new offices for the purposes of sale. By one of his acts he ventured on offering the last insult to his court and his Church, having raised to the dignity of cardinal his own valet, a youth, named Jacopo di Parma. What learning and talent he had—(and he was not without either)—only made Sixtus IV. more mischievous and odious. Dying in 1484, he was succeeded by Innocent VIII., who had actually purchased the votes of the conclave, in order to his election, and had no sooner attained

it, than he violated all treaties and oaths made with and sworn to the cardinals—though he had bound himself on pain of anathema, not to exercise his power of self-absolution. Impossible condition! But though perfidy was common to the popes, none had fixed it at so high a mark before.

Clear it was, that the mystery of iniquity was approximating its climax. How was a Savonarola likely to bear these things? Shall he not preach against them? Yes, if he can; and now he can—for he has gained facility by such practice as he could get, and has left untried no mode of self-improvement. He is not one of those flowers that veil their petals under the bud, and let them wither ere they blossom and bring fruit. No! not fruitless will this rich heart full of love be shut up within itself; he will go forth into the world, though as a lamb among raging wolves. His name shall be added to the list of great men, in whom the unconquerable will has triumphed over physical incapacity. Even his weak frame is to become, under the strong impulse of his fervid soul, an efficient instrument, and the neglected preacher shall ere long rise into an orator, who shall ultimately be followed by applauding thousands, who will own his power not only by the deep silence of admiration, but by the violent struggles of hysterical passion, and the more precious tribute of tears of conviction.

It was the year after the death of Sixtus IV., in the first year of the pontificate of the more infamous Innocent VIII., in the year 1485, that Savonarola went to preach in Brescia. His mind was full of the Scriptures, and that part of them before him which he has undertaken to expound is none other than the mysterious, soul-inspiring, spirit-stirring Apocalypse. How his imagination was fired—how his eloquence was wakened! Words poured from him like water

from the divine fountain of life, and the new light of gospel truth surrounded his brows with a glory like the aureola of saints. He stood before the people as a prophet. Such without his announcement they believed him to be—for he brought the crimes of the Church to the judgement of the book, and denounced them in the language of God himself. 'From the beginning of the world,' said Savonarola, 'a wonderful and inscrutable series of Divine judgements has appeared, wherein have been revealed not only the fearful anger, but the patient loving-kindness of God. Thus the father of the human race, though not left ultimately unpunished, was nevertheless not immediately precipitated to Hades. Thus also the universal corruption which had seized the entire human race was not immediately punished, but was permitted to continue until the time of the deluge, when it received punishment once for all. In like manner, the obduracy of king Pharaoh led not immediately to his destruction, but was permitted to continue, until finally he was overwhelmed in the waves of the Red Sea. Not otherwise will it be in our corrupt times, from which all the virtues have vanished, and in which all the vices are rampant. Those sunk in sin will be invited to conversion, and mercy will be offered if they turn to virtue, but justice will be at length executed on them if they persist and persevere in vice! The popes have attained through the most shameful simony and subtlety the highest priestly dignities, and even then, when seated in the holy chair, surrender themselves to a shamefully voluptuous life and an insatiable avarice. The cardinals and bishops follow their example. No discipline, no fear of God is in them. Many believe in no God. The chastity of the cloister is slain, and they who should serve God with holy zeal have become cold or lukewarm. The princes openly exercise tyranny. Their subjects

encourage them in their evil propensities, their robberies, their adulteries, their sacrileges. But, after the corrupted human race has abused for so many centuries the long-suffering of God, then at last the justice of God appears, demanding that the rulers of the people, who with base examples corrupt all the rest, should be brought to heavy punishment, and that the people of Asia and Africa, now dwelling in the darkness of ignorance, should be made partakers of the light.'

Such was the subject-matter of a discourse which, suiting the times, awakened the people of the times to a sense of their own and their rulers' iniquities, and an admiration of the preacher's boldness, who dared to utter such dangerous truths of popes, cardinals, bishops, and princes, from the very pulpit of the Church itself. None but prophets in the days of old shewed such extreme daring;—in these days shall the courageous spirit be deemed by impassioned Italians less than prophetic? This strain of mingled reproach, menace, and foretelling, is it less than inspired? 'I never,' remarked Savonarola continually, 'said I was a prophet—yet this I say, that God sent me to prophesy a scourge to Italy, which if I do I lose my body, if I do not I lose my soul.' Inconsistent this—yet not to be too strictly criticized. Savonarola was conscious he had a mission—it was proved also by the fact of his performing it. God sets every man the task he has to perform on earth, and therefore had set him his. But Savonarola had not boasted of it as a peculiar and special thing; this others had ventured, not he. The one assertion he was warranted in making, on the other he preferred silence. But by whomsoever he was accepted as a prophet, to him he was one, did his office, and delivered his warning, his blessing, or his curse.

Nor were the Italian people unprepared for the

announcement of such truths as Savonarola had to teach. They were not in such ignorance of the condition of the papacy, as some of the remoter nations. Savonarola's own mind was satisfied on points, on which at a much later period Luther was in doubt. Distance had lent to the German's view of Rome an enchantment, which to the Italian's closer inspection had no existence. Popular songs in the streets of Rome had satirized openly and boldly the faults at which Luther trembled while he denounced them, and which, not without an ecstacy of wonder, he came to a knowledge of. Not so with Savonarola. He knew intimately what the evil was from the first —yet at first thought it not politic to speak out. That, however, he might have the privilege of always meditating, and sometimes discussing the subject, he sought the protection of the cloister. Invested with its privileges, pious men of every age had dared to expose the impostures and innovations of the Roman see, which had been in a state of uncertainty, perhaps of permission or even of custom, but had not yet been decreed into unalterable laws and constitutions of the Church. It was reserved for a future period, and for the Council of Trent, to ossify the tumours and excrescences which had deformed the Church, and stamp the much doubted and controverted prerogative of the pope with the highest authority recognised in the Church. Then it was, that the Church of Rome surrendered her Catholicity for the sake of establishing herself as a Protesting Institution against the Church of the Reformation.

Yet however free was any man to testify against ecclesiastical corruption and abuse, he must nevertheless do it on his own responsibility, and liable to those revenges which power so well knows how to take. He might by his honesty put to peril not only his liberty but his life. This was known by Savonarola,

by his friends, and by the people, who accordingly were prepared to sympathize with, and to admire his personal courage and daring earnestness.

The Italian biographers of Savonarola, and their German compilers, have thought this a fitting place to discuss the question of his prophetic inspiration. His friend Giovanfranscesco Pico tells us that 'the judgements then pronounced by Savonarola, were not so indubitably manifest to him at that time as to leave no room for ambiguity, which would have been the case had the light of prophecy shone out beyond the veil of human reason. Savonarola was still only partially enlightened by the Divine light, and partially darkened by his own human intellect, yet under the guidance of reason he inclined towards the direction whither the Divine visions he had seen conducted him.' From this we may learn, that the truths on which Savonarola had long brooded, now began to take with him the shape of intuitions, and conscientious feeling to transcend, and sometimes supersede the exercise of reason. Difficult, however, for such a mind to explain its state to another—if not superstitiously experienced, it will be superstitiously received. Pico interprets it as well as he may; adding, that Savonarola 'on account of the prophetic spirit with which he was inspired, began to enunciate some mysteries about an impending destruction, although he concealed them under the cover of sacred Scripture, that impure men might be prevented from perceiving them, fearing lest the holy thing should be given to the dogs, and meantime be rendered absurd by visions that were still doubtful.' This Savonarola told to me in private; but in public he very frequently said that all he had preached concerning futurity, he apprehended by a positive infusion of Divine light to be true, just in the same way as any person of sound mind knew that every part

is less than the whole. 'There *must* be,' he would say, 'either a true affirmation or a true negation in every thing, and consequently he proceeded to preach the impending destruction with greater confidence, alleging that by means of his so preaching, the Christian world, then falling into ruin, and as it were by its abominable morals at the point of death, would be re-established.' Strong terms these to express a moral conviction that unless the Church repented she must perish, misinterpreted to mean, that he foresaw her fall and the time of its occurrence.

The German commentators agree, that in thus drawing his first prophetic conclusion from the Scriptures at Brescia, Savonarola stood on safe ground, in affirming as his fundamental principle, that God would deal with his Church at all times as he had dealt with her in the first ages. If, however, Savonarola, or his biographers, mean (says one [1]) 'to rest his prophetic claims at this time on an entirely subordinate degree of inspiration, in which much of mere human reason might mingle, and if Savonarola thought that prophetic illumination must be concealed under the cover of Scripture and certain symbols, to the end that the holy thing may not be thrown to dogs, one can so far in such a case approve his caution, inasmuch as it served at the same time to prevent his being deluded by doubtful visions:—but this opinion must be rejected, because the prophetic in the New Testament meaning, rests at last on such principles as have their proof in the elder Scriptures and the Divine economy themselves; yet this in no way excludes the higher illumination.' The writer however consoles himself, that subsequently Savonarola bore practical evidence to the superior light and wisdom by which God's missionaries are at all times distinguished. But the day of small things is not to be despised.

[1] A. G. Rudelbach.

Nor is any man what he is other than by the grace of God, which to every individual is a special inspiration, and in seasons of obscurity is granted for a special purpose. For truth stands fast, the centre of a system; entire humanity revolves round it as the earth about the sun. Christ reveals himself as the morning, awakening the ever vernal life in the human heart. Never will he set: whether it be high midday or deep midnight, he continues to shine like the summer sun in the remotest North. But where the heart is cold, the warm influences even of a heavenly love expire; night and winter supervene. Dark stand the walls of the Divine city, of the Church of Christ. Meanwhile, the interior is artificially illuminated, the obscure halls are so lit with tapers, that men forget it is night; and the cloud of frankincense is so frequently exalted, and in its vapours they are so constantly refreshed, that they are never allowed to think in the wintry desolation on their withered hearts. In the adorned house of night they murmur their prayers and listen to the voice of the preacher, but the stream of life flows not from it, it is stiffened to ice in the winter's cold. At length, from out the cloud of frankincense one steps forth and speaks—'I am God's vicar on earth,' and the people pray to him; neither can he err though he lieth—he is the only one who may promise blessing, even though he make men most miserable. But the people who sit in the darkness and shadow of death, shall yet again see the great light which lighteth the day; and the true watchmen on the walls shall call—'The night is far spent—and the morning cometh; let us put off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light!' One of these watchmen was Savonarola—one of those whom the agent of the darkness, who had named himself the vicar of the Almighty, shall cause to be conveyed from

20323

their station to the stake, the flaming pile which apostate power has continually reared against the twilight of morning, that the prophets who threatened it with destruction might perish therein. But ere long the time shall be fulfilled—the flames of the pile shall soar up into the holy presence of the Righteous One, and kindle there a fire which the unrighteous cannot quench. If the self-seeking human strength can only destroy; the Divine strength of love can alone create. The Reformation of the Church, which shall then commence, shall go forth conquering and to conquer; but the last victory the Lord has reserved for himself—in his great day.

By the success of his preaching at Brescia, Savonarola was encouraged, and he is reported to have applied himself with still greater assiduity to the practice of elocution; and by frequent preaching and more sedulous study of the Scriptures, to have cultivated that unction of speech, without which the preacher is but a babbler, however fluent. He continued loud in his lamentations and denunciations against the corruptions of the Church, speaking with the voice of inspiration, and not by the authority of man. He regarded not the interests of nominal apostles, who had become indisputable apostates—he knew that succession was the worst of pleas for a Church unsouled and reduced to a dead carcase, and that piety was the best credential a priest could show, even though ordained by Peter himself.

But the dawn is not noon day, and Savonarola has yet a season of preparation to go through before the purpose of his life shall be accomplished. This period he employed in writing a sketch of logic, physic and ethic, and a synopsis of the Aristotelian philosophy. His mode of composition required improvement, and by such exercises received it. After briefly announcing principles, he proceeded in

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these essays to an elaboration of the instances to which they applied, or by which they were illustrated. Aristotle formed naturally their ground-work, and the references to Thomas Aquinas are numerous. The style is light and familiar, but the clearness and decision of the statements bespeak the mind of a master—a mind that had now attained the full maturity of its powers, severely disciplined and diligently cultivated.

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA.

BOOK THE THIRD.

Practice.

Ιερουσαλὴμ, Ἰερουσαλὴμ, ἡ ἀποκτείνουσα τοὺς προφήτας, καὶ λιθοβολοῦσα τοὺς ἀπεσταλμένους πρὸς αὐτὴν, ποσάκις ἠθέλησα ἐπισυναγαγεῖν τὰ τέκνα σου, ὃν τρόπον ἐπισυνάγει ὄρνις τὰ νοσσία ἑαυτῆς ὑπὸ τὰς πτέρυγας, καὶ οὐκ ἠθελήσατε ; Matth. xxiii. 37.

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA.

CHAPTER I.

SAVONAROLA A CONTEMPLATIST.

Savonarola considered as a Prophet—The doctrinal value of prayer—The practical evidence of faith—Savonarola at Reggio—Invited to Florence.

SAVONAROLA, the learned, the poetic, the enthusiastic;—Savonarola, the incipient Reformer, the accomplished orator,—has now assumed the character of a prophet. How will he support the lofty office? We must not be impatient for an answer. If the year 1485 Savonarola had uttered a fearful warning at Brescia—but it is not until 1487 that we meet with him again, and then during a short time only—for any thing more important we have to wait till 1489. Throughout most of this period he comports himself rather as a contemplatist, than as an apostle. It is with him a season of preparation.

And this is according to the usual manner of God's dealings with his prophets. Thus He prepared Joseph in the dungeon, David on the mountains, Elijah in Horeb, the Baptist in the desert, the Messiah in the wilderness, St. Paul in Arabia, and St. John on Patmos. During these un-historical periods

it is, that the most important experiences are vouchsafed to the sanctified intelligence. Thus it was, that during his voluntary abstraction, and while refusing to converse with flesh and blood, the apostle of the Gentiles was caught up into the third heaven, and heard things not lawful to utter. Thus also in the seclusion and solitude of his island imprisonment, the beloved disciple beheld visions of the trials and triumphs of the Church. And Savonarola, as we have seen, had also his visions, whether the day-dreams of an excited fancy, or the calm intuitions of an enlightened conscience. In either case, he was content to embody them in the types of the inspired record, and especially in those symbols so harmoniously assembled in its last and crowning portion. It was, however, the internal evidences of religion that led him to such embodiment—and these were strengthening and accumulating in his mind, while thus retired from public notice, and peacefully occupied in ordinary duties. For all great things are nourished in silence and secrecy, and even so by hidden and quiet processes the mighty powers of nature work out her issues, whether beautiful or terrible, whether of life or death.

Savonarola was formed for a contemplatist; this is proved by his preference of mental to vocal devotion. Like Augustine, he too sought by prayer for revelations of Divine truth. This is a moot point with some theologians, and must therefore be cleared up.

That justice may be done to so important a subject, the argument against the practice shall be taken from one of the ablest advocates[1] of the visible Church against the invisible, that modern times have produced.

[1] George Stanley Faber, B.D., in his Primitive Doctrine of Election, 1836, p. 53–62.

It is objected against the practice, that it confounds the moral illumination of the Holy Ghost with his intellectual illumination, and that it is incumbered with practical inconveniences which indicate its absurdity.

The object of the illumination of the Spirit, it is argued, is not to make men unerring doctrinal critics, but to teach them self-knowledge through a powerful application of Scripture to their consciences. It was, indeed, the office of the Holy Ghost to guide the apostles into *all* truth; truth *intellectual* as well as truth *moral;* but that was an extraordinary gift and grace, not partaken by their successors. To pray for intellectual illumination, by which we may be instructed in the undoubted mind of Scripture, is to pray for the lofty prerogative of personal infallibility. Under such an aspect of the matter, we might as reasonably question the message of an inspired prophet or apostle, as impugn the Calvinistic or semi-Calvinistic exposition of the doctrine of predestination, when a pious man shall declare that he has made it a subject of prayer, and that he has risen from his knees internally convinced by the Spirit of the undoubted correctness of this or of that system.

But the practical inconveniences that flow from the assumption, demonstrate its absurdity. A Whitfield and a Wesley for instance, supplicated the throne of grace concerning the same text. One rose a Calvinist—the other an Arminian. It is contended that these opposite interpretations cannot *both* be correct; and that each of these estimable individuals had by his own private reasoning and judging upon Scripture, firmly persuaded himself, that his own view of election was undoubtedly right; and that an erroneous estimate of the nature and office of prayer, associated with a strong imagination, readily effected the remainder. Others also had thus fortified them-

selves in semi-Calvinism. Infidels and apostates likewise, such as Herbert of Cherbury, and Socinus, had prayed for, and, in their own opinion, obtained the sanction of heaven to their pernicious doctrines. Unless, therefore, we are inclined to believe that at different times, and through the instrumentality of different individuals, God has unerringly decided in favour of Calvinism, Arminianism, semi-Calvinism, Socinianism, and Infidelity; we must condemn the practice as erroneous, and originating from a want of accurately distinguishing between illumination moral, and illumination intellectual.

This is strongly put. In answer to it, however, it may be remarked, that the morally illuminated man is not likely to be left intellectually obscure; that the spiritual man is privileged to know of the things of the natural man; that we are commanded to read the Scripture in the spirit that maketh alive, rather than in the letter that killeth—a kind of interpretation which comes not without prayer and fasting, and pre-supposes the intellectually illuminating Spirit of God; and finally, that if we *do* we shall *know* what is right. But it is asserted that a variety of interpretation is sanctioned. Granted. But what of it? It is a difficulty certainly—but not the only one in relation to faith. Faith is a subjective act, and in the objective world is liable to all sorts of contradictions. If it were not so, it would not be faith but sight. He who has an answer to his prayer must believe in it, though the universe were to negative its consistency. But what, if after all, the apparent anomaly is capable of satisfactory solution? There is a variety in the unity of truth, and in regard to the doctrine litigated, we have seen that St. Paul included this whole variety in the proposition as stated by him. Each interpretation, therefore, is correct as a partial developement of the entire truth, and only

incorrect if accepted as the entire unfolding. Now the policy of the Divine economy has historically been, (doubtless in condescension to human infirmity,) seldom to entrust the entire truth to one individual, but to appoint each individual the advocate of some one position against other positions, all equally true as partial developements, all equally deficient as entire unfoldings; whereby, if sects and heresies have been promoted, it has also come to pass that every segment of the circle of truth has been thoroughly sifted and defended, preparatory to that glorious time of reunion, when the scattered parts of its broken body shall be re-assembled, and itself restored to its original integrity. Thus it was that John was appointed the apostle of love, Paul of faith, and James of works. What wonder! that an Augustine and a Whitfield were commissioned to teach predestination to holiness, and an Arminius and a Wesley prevision of holiness? Were they not both legitimate positions, and involved in the unity of the Divine purpose? And was not each strengthened in his office by being each charged with the defence of his particular doctrine? It was God's inspiration which declared that the doctrine was a truth; it was man's misapprehension which maintained it as the only truth. Denounce such misapprehension as the worst of errors? what then! Not only the folly but the sin of man, is the wisdom and the righteousness of God. For His ways are not as our ways, neither are His thoughts our thoughts.

For the rest, it is altogether to beg the question to make a distinction between the apostles and their successors. An Augustine, a Savonarola, and their later imitators, all who have made much account of the internal evidences of religion—have alike asserted either an express and direct Divine teaching, or an especial and immediate vocation—and it is to set

aside their evidence altogether, to assert as a fact that intellectual illumination was never granted to any but the primitive apostles. As to the authority belonging to one so illuminated, it may justly be said that it is only subjective. Nor is there need for it to be more; since every man for himself can appeal to God by prayer, and will receive such measure of the Spirit of interpretation as befits his station and office in the Church, or may be required by his individual condition and personal degree of attainment in grace and holiness.

It was in the spirit of these remarks, that Savonarola replied to those who objected to his prophetic assumption.

'We believe not,' said they, 'in such prophets as you are, but only in those who are approved by the Church.'

'How do you know,' demanded Savonarola, 'that they are true prophets?'

'Oh, the saints have written it!' they rejoined.

'What,' he again demanded, 'do you know about that? Perhaps those who wrote have written falsehoods. I believe, because God in his mercy has given me the light of faith, which determines me to believe.'

The general disinclination to these views of spiritual belief, was one of the things that afflicted Savonarola. 'So deep has faith sunk,' he writes in one of his works, 'so much is it, the heavenly light in man, extinguished, that I may no longer discriminate, whether men mean by the term something which each man sincerely acknowledges, and exclusively knows to be faith, or something communicated from childhood by human precept, or a light derived from above.'

The fact is, that just at this period, so far from being disposed to discuss points of spiritual doctrine,

the minds of men in Italy were given over to political contention. And Savonarola was himself soon destined to consider rather the civil than the religious relations of men. About the year 1487 a provincial chapter of the Dominicans of Lombardy was held at Reggio, at which not only Savonarola, but also prince Pico della Mirandola, was present. In the disputation which then took place, Savonarola showed so much talent, eloquence, and erudition, that Pico conceived a strong interest in his favour, and was desirous to have him recalled to Florence, feeling assured, no doubt, that the preacher would now appear to better advantage than he had shown before. He therefore wrote to his friend the celebrated Lorenzo de' Medici concerning him, and strongly urged the expediency of that city being enriched with the presence of so much ability, learning, and merit, as he recognized in the person of this Dominican. Thus was Savonarola invited thither, and became consequently the Prior of San Marco. Henceforth his name is connected with the history of Florence.

CHAPTER II.

FLORENCE UNDER THE MEDICI.

The family of the Medici—Cosimo's patronage of Greek literature—Chrysoloras and his scholars—Niccolo Niccoli—Platonic academy—Theodore Gaza—Bessarion—George of Trebisond—Germ of monarchism—Pietro—Lorenzo and Giuliano—Conspiracy of the Pazzi—Lorenzo and the King of Naples—Decline of the wealth of the Medici—And consequently of its influence—Levity and frivolity of the literary spirit—Poggio—Beccatelli—And the controversialists—Naturalism in art—Politeness in philosophy—Sensuality in life and manners.

THE family of the Medici had from the beginning of the fifteenth century ruled in Florence. The reigning pope, Innocent VIII., was more than friendly to its influence. This pontiff outdid all his predecessors in infamy. They were content with the sin of nepotism. Innocent VIII. publicly recognized his illegitimate offspring, bestowing on them the wealth of the Church. Such was the celibacy of the clergy then, not separating them from female fellowship, but substituting for lawful wedlock illicit concubinage! Seven of his children, by various mothers, thus became pensioners on the ecclesiastical treasury. Having effected the marriage of one of his sons to a daughter of Lorenzo de' Medici, he carried his favouritism to the family so far, as to bestow a cardinalate on her brother Giovanni, though then only about fourteen years of age, stipulating however that the

boy should not take his seat in the Consistory till he was sixteen. The youth thus prematurely advanced to power and honour, ultimately became that same Leo X., who, notwithstanding his love of letters and various accomplishments, yet infected with all the vices of his age, failed in the first instance to appreciate the true nature of Luther's efforts, and in the last to arrest the progress of the Reformation.

The foundations of the family prosperity were laid in commerce by a previous Giovanni de' Medici, who died in 1428. Of his two sons, Cosimo and Lorenzo, the former supported and increased its dignity by urbanity, kindness, and generosity, towards all classes of society. The authority which he thus acquired for himself and his descendants, consisted in a tacit influence on their part, and a voluntary acquiescence on that of the people—not in any prescribed or definite compact. It was purely the legitimate influence of great wealth and public virtue. The Florentines considered the Medici as the fathers, rather than the rulers of the republic, while these carefully affected the characters of fellow-citizens and servants of the state. Yet did Cosimo and Lorenzo not escape opposition, imprisonment, and banishment, from the success of a rival family. They were, however, soon recalled to power, and signalized themselves by promoting science and encouraging men of learning, particularly the students of Greek literature.

To Boccaccio Italy was first indebted for the introduction, and for the preservation and restoration of Homer's works. On his death, however, the study of the Greek language and its products ceased again to be pursued. But Emanuel Chrysoloras, a noble Greek, during the interval of his important embassies, revived them at the beginning of the fifteenth century, among the people of Florence and of other Italian cities. His disciples were neither few nor

noteless. After his death, his scholars, Ambrogio Traversari, Leonardo Bruno, Carlo Marsuppini, (the two latter, being natives of Arezzo, assumed the name of Aretino) Poggio Bracciolini, Guarino Veronese, and Francisco Filelfo, vied with each other in carrying on the same noble work, till it received new aid from other learned Greeks, who were driven from Constantinople by the dread of the Turks, or by the destruction of the eastern empire. To these illustrious foreigners, as well as to the learned Italians, who shortly became their successful rivals, even in the knowledge of their national history and language, Cosimo afforded the most liberal protection and support. To him Giovanni Aurispa was indebted for relief from his embarrassments, occasioned by his large purchases of ancient manuscripts. Nor stood Cosimo altogether alone in the patronage of the learned—his fellow-citizen, Niccolo Niccoli, even exhausted his fortune in this kind of liberality.

Another scholar of Chrysoloras, Gemisthus Pletho, devoted himself to the study of Platonic philosophy, and exercised great influence over Cosimo, who thereon established an academy at Florence for its prosecution, and educated Marsilio Ficino, the son of his favourite physician, for the express purpose of securing its objects. In this manner attention was revived, not only to the works of Plato—but to those of Plotinus, Porphyrius, and Jamlichus. Ficino, moreover, studied theology, physiology, and music, esteeming the latter as a mean for elevating the soul to God.

But during the time that a deeper comprehension of the Platonic philosophy was working, and an universal acceptation of the same was prepared by continual translations, there was on the other side, if not in the most encouraging manner, an universal attention directed to the difference between Plato and

Aristotle. Two Greeks, Bessarion, and George of Trebisond—the former as great a worshipper as a student of Plato; and the other, perhaps, through his longer residence in Italy, as much devoted to Aristotle—directed with extraordinary ardour their talents to the question of the worth and importance of the respective philosophers, aided by Theodore Gaza, who, after much consideration, finally declared himself the champion of the Stagyrite. George of Trebisond applied himself to the practical, rather than the speculative phase of the Platonic philosophy, inasmuch as scarcely any vice or evil existed, which he did not laboriously establish as a consequence of Platonism. So little had he avoided personality, touching the several vindicators of Plato, not sparing even Bessarion, with whom he had previously been on the most amicable terms, that the latter was compelled to defend himself with much decision, and some asperity. Bessarion, accordingly, not only undertook to explain more accurately the Platonic philosophy than his predecessors had done, but sought also to establish, against the attacks of his opponents, its manifold conformity with Christianity, which he did with much success in a work entitled 'In calumniatorem Platonis.'

Cosimo had conceived the plan of making a firm position for himself and family, by elevating the republic of Florence into greater significance, and making it the recognized centre of the four continually declining states,—Rome, Naples, Milan, and Venice. He saw this place grow in influence and authority in his own time—and meanwhile laboured to make himself the mid-point of his policy, thus undermining the republican principle of the state, and laying the germ of the monarchical principle, which however beneficial in the commencement, might have ended in tyranny had it not eventually been crushed.

That Cosimo so earnestly, and with such great liberality, advanced art and science was distinctive, not only of his taste and aptitudes, but also of his political system. He wished to ensure, for the spiritual life of so many accomplished and civically qualified men, a safe standing in relation with the state and proper to their talents, and thereby win popular opinion. This scheme succeeded so well, that when individuals not of his party endeavoured to excel him, he could afford to withdraw himself for a time from state affairs, that by their political incapacity his subsequent influence might be increased.

After Cosimo's death (1464), the direction of state affairs passed into the hands of his son Pietro, who was advised by evil counsellors to call in the greater part of the considerable sums which his father, in the certainty thereby of obliging many who had not sufficient security to give, had beneficently lent. Without reflecting on the numbers the measure would bring into distress, Pietro so weakened by it the foundations of his consideration and power, that the rival party determined to step forth anew, in order to re-establish the republic, or rather to take the place of the house of Medici. But its power was too firmly fixed—the attempt was in vain—all Anti-Mediceans were expelled or persecuted, the government of the state continued in Pietro's possession during his life, and the virtual monarchism of the family became still more firmly established.

When Pietro died in 1469, his two sons, Lorenzo and Giuliano, inherited the almost unlimited control of the state affairs of Florence. As, however, the latter was only sixteen years of age, the actual power rested in Lorenzo.

The favourite designs of Cosimo for the advancement of arts and letters, and the establishment of his family ascendancy, though necessarily somewhat at

first neglected and opposed, had been projected with sufficient strength to endure the few years of his son Pietro's feeble reign, and then under Lorenzo more vigorously to advance, and even be elevated to the utmost possible splendour. In order to establish these, as well as to promote in every way the study of Platonism, Lorenzo revived the forgotten convivial Banquets of Plotinus and Porphyrius, which were celebrated on the 7th November, a day whereon Plato is stated both to have been born and to have died. The Platonic Academy, according to Marsilio, numbered on these occasions, as associates, seventy-two mostly well known, and even celebrated names. At its head was Marsilio himself, the most learned and subtle of all the Platonists of his time—a man unwearied in recommending and translating the writings of Plato, and the later Alexandrines, whose doctrines, with those of many later essayists, had got mixed up with the pure Platonic system. By his side, and in the same circle, appear, with almost equal prominence, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and Angelo Poliziano, both gifted with unusual talents; the one addicted to philosophy, and admired as a miracle of nature—a phœnix of genius, but snatched from life too soon, for the mass of his early produced knowledge to receive sufficient ripening—the other not less celebrated as a poet, and promoter of Greek and Roman learning.

Of all the opponents of the Medici, the family of the Pazzi were the most inveterate; against their stratagems the Medici found themselves, even by reason of their riches and princely pomp, compelled to maintain their high position. Bitter hate was from time to time renewed, and experience having shown that an overthrow of the Medici was not to be effected by a popular outbreak, the assassination of the brothers

was determined. A horrible transaction this, which has been justly quoted as an incontrovertible proof of the practical atheism of the times in which it took place—one in which a pope, a cardinal, an archbishop, and several other ecclesiastics, associated themselves with a band of ruffians to destroy two men who were an honour to their age and country; and purposed to perpetrate their crime at a season of hospitality, in the sanctuary of a Christian Church, and at the very moment of the elevation of the host, when the congregation bowed down before it, and the assassins were presumed to be in the immediate presence of their God.

The plan was concocted at Rome with the participation, as before noticed, of Pope Sixtus IV. On the 26th April, 1478, in the church of the Reparata, during the mass, while the host was elevating and the multitude were kneeling, the murderous blow was struck, and the very mass-bell itself sounding the signal to the other conspirators to possess themselves of the palace and government. Giuliano fell, but Lorenzo escaped with a slight wound. The efforts also of the other conspirators failed, and more than seventy were the following day executed. The troubles of the Medici, however, were not yet ended —they suffered next the ban of the pope, and hostilities from his confederates—but the king of Naples, the most important amongst these, was separated from the flagitious pontiff by a bold resolution of Lorenzo's. As the peril of carrying this determination into effect threatened only his own person, Lorenzo heroically and readily delivered himself into the power of the king of Naples, for the sake of an opportunity to deliberate and negotiate with him, for the restoration of peace. This daring experiment prospered in the issue—the hostile power was broken, and Lorenzo

was received on his return to Florence with merited enthusiasm. Nor was the increase of his reputation without advantage to the republic.

The wealth of the Medici was nevertheless at this time not what it had been under Cosimo. From Pietro's narrow-hearted measure nothing had been gained, the administration of the property having been necessarily committed to foreign hands. Lorenzo, moreover, gradually, and at length entirely withdrew himself from commercial engagements. The residue of the property was distributed in palaces and landed possessions among the family. The splendour of the house, and so many difficult circumstances, demanded enormous sums, which could only be regularly supplied by drawing on the moneys of the state; moneys that had been consecrated to its own needs and uses, whence great disorder in the administration of government, and an undermining of the Medicean influence.

This, then, was the political condition of things in Florence,—a republic struggling to resist the influence of a single and illustrious family, under which it had indeed for a long time flourished, but which was now beginning to absorb its independence, and, from an inevitable necessity, to treat it as the mere appanage of a private estate.

The more inward aspects of the family influence are likewise remarkable; the manner in which by their means literature and the Platonic philosophy started into vitality, and grew into vigour. A manifold and glorious life it was that became thus unfolded, making indeed of the last half of the fifteenth century a wonderful preparation for that reformation of religion and learning, which was shortly to astonish the ruling powers of Christendom. Nevertheless, relatively to the individuals who were the agents to whom Providence had confided a task they understood not, we

have to suggest many drawbacks. They entirely failed in recognizing the religious and moral basis of the life which they ought to have lived. Even the best and worthiest of those who had engaged in these philosophical and literary studies, allowed themselves, together with the pursuit of heathen learning, an indulgence in the 'cheerful sins,' that were not inconsistent with its profession. There was in consequence much volatility and frivolity both in letters and life. Poggio in his 'Liber facetiarum,' indulged himself in licentious jests and tales, which are scarcely redeemed by the service he renders in exposing the character of the priesthood; and though he belonged himself to the order, he was in his own conduct equally blameable. It adds to the evidence that it is desirable to accumulate, that this prurient work, produced in the bosom of the Church, was probably an amusement for the learned leisure of prelates and cardinals. His friend Antonio Beccatelli, of Palermo, the member of another circle, dedicated to Cosimo a book, under the title of 'Hermaphroditus,' — a collection of immoral, obscene epigrams, which Poggio himself found too indecent, and which in many places, such as Ferrara, Milan, and Bologna, were with the effigies of the author publicly burned, and also provoked Lorenzo Valla to utter the wish, that the author might be soon doomed to a like fate in his proper person. Even the abundant literary controversies of that time were conducted mostly in a very offensive and scandalous fashion, and ended usually in the opponents impeaching each other openly of gross immorality. These mutual recriminations show only too truly the state of morals in the men and their times.

The study of antiquity and art, nevertheless, received a beneficial impulse. From the time of Cosimo de Medici, and chiefly under his actual encourage-

ment and protection, a thorough new era commenced, in which appear the names of Lorenzo Ghiberti, Battista Alberti, Filippo Brunellesco, Donato Donatello, Fra Angelico da Fiesole, Masaccio, Filippo Lippi, and many others equally celebrated. But again, even in Florence, the proper centre of the whole circle, it became manifest, and chiefly in painting, how the religious and Christian sentiment was gradually banished, and a certain naturalism in art meanwhile introduced.

Only in the study of the Platonic philosophy appeared a more elevated aim; but even here the easy and polite was preferred. In religion likewise, Christ was less esteemed than Plato,—and Plato, as the fundamental type of the mixed Christo-Platonic system, was accepted rather than Jesus. In fine, the men of the age sought what might be made the plaything of leisure hours, not what must, if accepted, become the serious business of life. Meanwhile, the multitude were given to sensuality and animal enjoyment. Such was the state of things in Florence when visited the second time by Savonarola.

CHAPTER III.

SAVONAROLA AT SAN MARCO.

Library of San Marco—Savonarola's Lectures—Lorenzo's encouragement of ecclesiastical oratory—Mariano da Genezano—The policy of Lorenzo—The character of the times—Savonarola's garden-sermon—His style of preaching—Is made Prior—Refuses to acknowledge Lorenzo's authority—Lorenzo's condescensions—Savonarola's inflexibility—Machiavelli's opinion on Roman religiosity, human probity, and Savonarola's influence.

THE Dominican monastery of San Marco at Florence, of which Savonarola is now Prior, had been erected by Cosimo de' Medici at enormous expense. It had a library also, which owed its establishment to the generosity of that great man. The circumstances were these:—

Niccolo Niccoli, who died in 1436, had directed by his will that his library should be devoted to the use of the public. He appointed sixteen Curators, amongst whom was Cosimo de' Medici. After his death, it appeared that he was greatly in debt, and that his liberal intentions were likely to be frustrated by the insolvency of his means. Cosimo, therefore, proposed to his associates, that if they would resign to him the right of disposition of the books, he would himself discharge all the debts of Niccolo, to which they readily acceded. Having thus obtained the sole direction of the manuscripts, he deposited

them for public use in this same monastery of San Marco. This collection was the foundation of another celebrated library in Florence, known by the name of the Bibliotheca Marciana, which is still open to the inspection of the learned.

In the arrangement of the library of San Marco, Cosimo had procured the assistance of Tomaso Calandrino, who drew up a scheme for that purpose, and prepared a scientific catalogue of the books it contained. In selecting a coadjutor, the choice of Cosimo had fallen on an extraordinary man. Though Tomaso was the son of a poor physician of Sarzana, and ranked only in the lower order of the clergy, he had the ambition to aim at possessing some specimens of these venerable relics of ancient genius. His learning and his industry enabled him to gratify his wishes, and his perseverance surmounted the disadvantages of his situation. In this pursuit he was frequently induced to anticipate his scanty revenue, well knowing that the estimation in which he was held by his friends, would preserve him from pecuniary difficulties. With the Greek and Roman authors no one was more intimately acquainted, and as he wrote a very fine hand, the books he possessed acquired additional value from the marginal observations which he was accustomed to make in perusing them. By the rapid degrees of fortunate preferment, Tomaso was, in the short space of twelve months, elevated from his humble situation to the chair of St. Peter, under the name of Nicholas V. The scanty library of his predecessors had been nearly dissipated or destroyed by frequent removals between Avignon and Rome, according as the caprice of the reigning pontiff chose either of those places for his residence; and it appears from the letters of Traversari, that scarcely any thing of value remained.

Nicholas V. is therefore to be considered as the founder of the library of the Vatican.

And Savonarola is in the monastery of San Marco, bound as it would seem by such associations both to the Medici and the papacy, as it would be difficult to undervalue. Nor was he himself unattended with celebrity. To his lectures crowded hearers of all ranks; even men like Pico della Mirandola, Girolamo and Domenico Benivieni, and others of like note were among them. What wonder to them who had heard him in his first preaching in the church of Lorenzo—what a difference betwixt then and now. Then the ineffective preacher, now the omnipotent orator. Anon, the numerous audience so much increased, that the narrow hall was insufficient to contain them, and the interior of the cloister was needs called into requisition. At length the more influential of the citizens obtained permission to hear the lectures in the church itself.

Lorenzo could not fail of being proud of such a protegè. Already, induced by the serious disposition which formed part of his character, the magnanimous Medici had favoured many learned ecclesiastics. Moral and religious themes were frequently the subject of his daily talk. He had already eminently distinguished one Mariano da Genazano, an Augustine monk, and superior of his order, for whose use and that of his associates, Lorenzo had erected in the suburbs of Florence an extensive building, and endowed it as a monastery. Thither, indeed, he was himself often wont to seek temporary refuge with a few select friends from the busy world, and enjoy the conversation of the learned ecclesiastic. Nor are we left altogether ignorant of the arguments discussed in the convent of San Gallo, being informed by Valori that the existence and attributes of Deity, the

insufficiency of temporal enjoyments to fill the mind, and the probability and moral necessity of a future state, were the most customary topics of discourse. Lorenzo had evidently expected an addition to these refined pleasures in the company of Savonarola—but he was destined to be taught a different experience in the convent of San Marco, from what he had learned in that of San Gallo.

The frame of mind in which Savonarola assumed his new duties at San Marco, was altogether alien to the then spiritual and political condition of men and manners in Florence. Whatever external glitter might belong to the state of the republic, he saw at a glance that it had become a mere fulcrum for supporting the power and consideration of a single family. Whatever the seeming, or even real generosity of Lorenzo, the policy of the Medici was necessarily selfish. That the power of the monied aristocracy also had been there by effectually subverted, could not be hidden from a clear-sighted observer. But the honest mind must have been most troubled by the fact, that from the overbalance of the mere sensuous life, even when refined rather than purified by literature, the legitimate influence of the Christian religion was all but suppressed. There was, besides, no man bold enough to chastise, with eloquent reproof, the follies and vices of the age. The most celebrated preachers of the time were moral preachers, so called; who studiously concealed the deep and grievous evil of sin from the people, and based the Divine blessing on the performance of particular merits and self-elected duties. Men admired their masterly disposition, the logical clearness and soundness with which they treated their argument—qualities surely subordinate in importance, where first the demonstration of the spirit with power is requi-

site—and went away cold and unmoved from their preaching. Savonarola, therefore, had to fight a double battle,—not only against the times generally, but also against the prevailing and most approved style of preaching, both of them naturally assisting the other in opposition to his efforts. How far he comprehended his times, how keenly he penetrated their inmost poverty and lifelessness, but slightly covered to outward observance, his writings sufficiently show. His prophetic voice, without reserve, laid this bare to the minds of all—nay, necessarily became more decided and severe as he beheld sin disguised in the mask of piety, and the mass of half and nominal Christians regarding every demand to submit themselves unconditionally to the truth, as a dangerous fanaticism,—even a trespass against humanity. It is thus that Savonarola writes concerning the character of the time, the people, and their leaders; by which we may more clearly see, how he came by degrees into a misrelation with the most noble representative of the time, Lorenzo de' Medici. How painful was this to Savonarola, from the high esteem in which he ingenuously held Lorenzo's talents and elevated aims!

'In our days,' says he, 'when all Christians have come to such a pass, that they communicate only once a year, and that with very sorry preparation, they are worse than the heathen were, and every day become more depraved. Every year they confess their sins, and yet return to the same sins, promising every time God to live better, but never performing their promises. Our priests, who without devotion and reverence administer the Supper, are yet worse than the laity. Thus, because Christians have forsaken the true service of Christ, they are now-a-days fallen into such blindness, that they know not what the

name of Christian means, and wherein the true service of God consists. They occupy themselves with outward ceremonies, and know nothing of the inner service of God. Seldom or never they read the sacred Scriptures, or if they read them, they understand them not; or if they understand them, they have no taste for them—yea, they only say, 'Our soul is disgusted with this vulgar feast.' Who will give us to hear Cicero's eloquence, and the sounding words of the poets, the soft diction of Plato, and the acuteness of Aristotle? For the Scriptures are far too simple, contain food only fit for women. Preach to us the refined and sublime!' And thus the preachers accommodate themselves to the people. Since they could no more endure sound doctrine, the people have given themselves to lies, they invite such teachers as suit their itching ears, they turn themselves away from the truth, and follow cunningly-devised fables. Also the princes and heads of the people will not hear the truth, but say, 'Preach to us what pleases us, preach to us flatteries, and tell us something good.' And hence, Christian people now wander in great darkness.'

It was, according to his own account, on the 1st of August, 1489, that Savonarola began in the garden of the cloister at San Marco, under a shrubbery of Damascus roses, to expound to a numerous audience his favourite book—the book so dear to the poetico-religious enthusiast—the Apocalypse of St. John the Divine. The throng of people was so great that there was scarcely room for the monks themselves, many of whom stood on the choir-wall, and it was difficult to find one who would do the customary duty at the door or in the sacristy. It was not the first time, as we know, that Savonarola had undertaken the interpretation of this very prophecy, in order to denounce the moral degeneracy of

his times with the threatenings of Divine anger. Now again, he is heard discussing and enforcing the necessity of an earnest reformation in the collective Church, and in individual life. Three points he contends for — that the Church of God must be renewed, and that in his time—that all Italy would be first heavily visited—and that the punishment would soon arrive. 'The sword of the Lord,' he repeatedly exclaimed, 'will soon and suddenly come upon the earth!' The connexion between the Reformation of the Church and the visitation of Italy, was so firmly established in his mind, that he continually insisted, that Italy above all other lands had accumulated sins, and most shamefully abused the glorious privileges granted to her by God, and thus the spiritual and temporal tyranny under which the Church and the people of God suffered, was to him a light matter. It was a system of mind, heart, and devotion with Savonarola. Wherefore any endeavour to conform himself to the taste of the times, which according to his own relation he 'little heartedly' attempted at the commencement of 1490, necessarily failed—a failure which only confirmed him the more in his earlier decision.

The effect of Savonarola's sermon was, as might have been expected, very great, and so much the more, as now the external means that appertain to the finished orator were in his power. On those who were waiting and longing for the truth, his words, though frequently passing as a hail storm, fell as quickening dew. The city were divided in opinion upon him. Some said—'he is a straight-forward and pious man'—others, 'he is learned, but withal very crafty'—others again, 'he depends on false and foolish visions.'

After all, however powerful his discourses and appeals, they were not artistically elaborated, and

well arranged. They, indeed, depended for their effect rather on their general want of elaboration. The preaching of Savonarola was not memoriter, but only meditated. On the contrary, as from the beginning has always happened, those more educated æsthetic persons, who in all ways have striven, and know how to guard against the impression of 'monkish trickeries,' found much that was objectionable in the subject, the style, and delivery. These were careful how they submitted to the spell of an apparently wild sort of eloquence. The natural strength and energy of it, as being the instantaneous and immediate influence of a deep spirit, nevertheless impressed most hearers so powerfully, that not only the immense crowd frequently burst out into loud weeping, but even men such as Pico della Mirandola were not seldom seized with awe, by the power of his discourse, and his striking application of Biblical texts. In a word, Savonarola was an extempore preacher, deriving assistance from Scriptural phraseology, and a finished elocution.

On the other hand, there were those who were altogether incapable of feeling these appeals—who not only derided the severe moral preacher, but became his worst and most slanderous enemies. This was the more natural, as Savonarola showed little anxiety to earn for himself the favour of the ruling party. Especially displeasing was his want of all proof of attention and deference towards Lorenzo, with which at a later period he was charged, as unbending self-will and priestly arrogance.

Not until a year after his return to Florence, was Savonarola installed as prior of the convent of San Marco. It had been customary for the new prior on his induction to make a formal visit, and to commend himself and his convent to the protection of Lorenzo, as the first person in the state, and patron of the

cloister. This custom, to the astonishment of servile minds, Savonarola refused to observe—God was the only authority he deigned to acknowledge. The brethren were afraid of the scandal his conduct would occasion. 'Who has raised me,' demanded Savonarola, 'to this dignity, Lorenzo, or God?' To this question they had no answer; Savonarola accordingly pursued—'Let us render then thanks to God to whom they are due, and not to a mortal man!'

Lorenzo was not insensible to the sublimity of Savonarola's motives; and though, doubtless, piqued at this studied neglect, sought by all means to make a friend of the stern pietist, and win him over to his interest. The worldly politician knew the power and popularity of the religious enthusiast. He felt, by instinct, that two equal forces were opposed—his own, and that new zeal which, if only by its novelty, had now a temporary advantage. The natural and the spiritual man were plainly antagonised—the refined man of taste, and the severe advocate of duty; had come within the same arena—and the former soon confessed the superiority of the latter.

The natural man accordingly determined to make concessions. If the spiritual man will not visit him, he must needs visit the spiritual man. And so it is that Lorenzo frequently visits the church and the cloister of San Marco, apparently to join in the devotional exercises, and partake the mass with the faithful, but really to facilitate a union and agreement between himself and the austere prior. Accordingly, Lorenzo would, after the service, proceed into the garden and there walk awhile, thus affording to Savonarola the opportunity of meeting and conversing with him on amicable terms. But this Savonarola avoided, saying, 'The communion I hold is with God, and not with man.' Sometimes the brethren

would go and inform the prior of the Mediçi's condescension.

'Lorenzo is in the garden,' they said.

'Has he desired my presence?' asked Savonarola.

'No,' replied the brethren.

'Be it so! Let him tarry and continue his devotions!' said Savonarola; and remained at his post, leaving Lorenzo to take his departure unaddressed.

But if courtesy have failed, surely gifts will dissolve the frost of this strange, but only seeming inflexible conscientiousness. Savonarola must abide this test—nevertheless he is constant to his purpose—still as at first he speaks with the same freedom, and condemns all who walk in the ways of wickedness. Nay, he repels the temptation from the pulpit, repeatedly observing, 'A good dog barks always, in order to defend his master's house, and if a robber offer him a bone or the like, he pushes it aside, and ceases not therefore to bark!' Not very complimentary this to Lorenzo, the magnificent—he the robber base enough to bribe the faithful hound! It was true, and yet Lorenzo was not consciously such—he thought himself and his house benefactors, and in one sense benefactors they were, and had been, to the republic, and yet, in another, (such are the difficulties of political and religious relations,) the greatest and most dangerous enemies.

One time Lorenzo sent through his chancellor Piero da Babiena, a great sum of gold scudi for the poor-box of the church of San Marco. After they had opened the box, Savonarola divided the silver from the gold, and said to the brethren, 'This is sufficient for our needs, send the gold to the guardians of the poor of St. Martin, that it may be divided among the poor.'

When Lorenzo saw that the flames only extended themselves, he adopted another mean, to extinguish

or keep them at a distance. He commissioned five noble, prudent, and from their powers of persuasion, well-qualified citizens, to go in his name and advise Savonarola that he should preach in another manner, for the sake of the public weal and peace, and for the benefit of the cloister. But Savonarola briefly replied, 'You say you have come to me for the public welfare and our cloister's advantage—but I say to you, that it is not so—but Lorenzo de' Medici has sent you to me. Tell him in my name—he is a Florentine and the first of the state, I a foreigner and a poor brother, yet will it happen that he must go hence, and I remain here!' With this they were fain to depart, their business unperformed.

Such extraordinary conduct on the part of Savonarola can only be justified by his conviction, that however worthily illustrious, well-intentioned, and for a long time beneficial the house of the Medici had been to the republic of Florence, the time had now arrived when its influence had become destructive, and that, in the person of Lorenzo, it must for the good of the common weal be resisted. With all his excellent intellectual gifts, (which Savonarola, noways passionately blind, fully, as we have said, recognized,) Lorenzo nevertheless affected that sensuous direction of thought, which though allied to a fine humanity, yet had no necessary connexion with religion and morality. Meanwhile, he had occupied a position in the state, which, over and above many already terrible misunderstandings and constant partizanships, caused by the violation of the original free form of the constitution, seemed also to have undermined and scared away the severer discipline, the rude simplicity of the old republic. Such a thing was not to be borne in that circle, where men inspired were celebrating the beginning of a new spiritual life. When Savonarola, therefore, in his

preaching, continued amid threatenings of Divine vengeance, to advocate a general reformation of manners, and on the other hand, without reserve, and with energy, to denounce all corruption and injustice wherever he perceived it, not omitting to notice individual abuses of the government, and to hint at the miscarried purpose of his gifts, Lorenzo desired anew, though in another manner, to soften the upright orator. But it was in vain that he sought to impose silence on a man who recognized in himself a prophetic impulse, and proposed to do with the Church in his times, what the Seers of old had done with her in their days,—to wit, rouse her from the lethargy that was as death to a life of righteousness, that should be for the salvation of many. Convinced that, notwithstanding all hindrances, the word that he spake would strike root, Savonarola was not to be restrained by the arm of power, cajoled by the lip of flattery, or corrupted by the smiling eye of courtly favour.

Nor was Lorenzo blind to the condition of the people, but frequently in express terms commended Savonarola for aiming at their moral improvement, and was willing to endure for that the personal reproofs of the impartial preacher. But when the regeneration of the multitude is once commenced, then must the rulers be needs troubled, for a change in the relations between them is generating, and verily, a period of transition is both perilous and painful. Of this Lorenzo was to have experience, and it is to his credit, that he could still esteem the agent of a new developement, from which he was already suffering great inconvenience. Even such religion as he possessed enabled him to do this—religion which in an Italian mind, however depraved, never loses its claims. It was this fact which assisted

Savonarola to get such sudden influence—a fact, on which the subtle Machiavelli, in relation to this very subject, moralizes in one of his discourses, a few sentences from which will enlighten the reader.

'Numa, finding a very ferocious people, and wishing to reduce them to civil obedience by the arts of peace, instituted religion, as necessary to all who would cultivate politeness, and ensure the existence of custom. For many ages accordingly, there was never so much fear of God as in this republic, which facilitated whatever enterprize the Senate or the leading men among the Romans designed to make. And whoever will examine an infinite number of actions, as well of the Roman people collectively, as of many Romans individually, will observe how these citizens feared much more to break an oath than the laws, since these esteemed more the power of God than that of men, as we see manifested by the example of Scipio and Manlius Torquatus.

'After the defeat that Annibal had given the Romans at Cannæ, many citizens assembling together, terrified and timid, had agreed to abandon Italy, and to go into Sicily; Scipio hearing this, went to find them, and with a naked sword in his hand, obliged them to swear not to abandon their country. Lucius Manlius, father of Titus Manlius, who was afterwards called Torquato, had been accused by Marcus Pomponius, tribune of the people; and before the day of judgement came, Titus went to find Marcus, and threatening to kill him if he did not swear to withdraw the accusation from his father, he was obliged to swear, and thus through fear having sworn, he withdrew the accusation. And thus those citizens, whom neither the love of their country nor its laws could retain in Italy, were held by an oath which they were forced to take; and that tribune

put aside the hatred he had to the father, the injury that the son had done him, and his own honour, to obey the oath taken.

'All this arose from nothing else than the religion which Numa had introduced into that city. And we see, whoever considers well the Roman history, how much religion served to command the armies, to reconcile the people, to maintain good men, and to shame the bad. So that if we had to dispute to what prince Rome owed most, Romulus or Numa, I think that Numa would hold the first rank, because where there is religion arms can be easily introduced, but where there are arms without religion, the latter is of difficult initiation. And we see that it was not necessary for Romulus to have the authority of God for creating the Senate, and to make other civil and military offices, but it was necessary for Numa, who feigned to have a meeting with a nymph, who advised him of what he had to counsel the people—a fable occasioned by his desire to impose new and extraordinary laws on this city, and his doubt whether his own authority would suffice for the purpose.

'And certainly there never was any extraordinary law-giver amongst a people, who did not have recourse to God, because otherwise such benefactors would not have been accepted; since it is very well known by wise men, that they have not in themselves self-evident reasons, able to persuade others. Therefore wise men, wishing to avoid this difficulty, have recourse to God. Thus did Lycurgus, thus Solon, thus many others who have had the same aim as they had.

'Admiring then the goodness and the prudence of the Roman people, Numa permitted to them the utmost freedom of deliberation. It is indeed true, that the state of those times full of religion, and those men with whom he had mainly to work,

suggested to him great facility in obtaining his aims, being able easily to imprint on them some new form. And no doubt he who wishes in the present times to make a republic, will find it easier with the men of the mountains, where there is no politeness, than with those who are accustomed to live in the city, where politeness is corrupted. A sculptor can more easily form a beautiful statue from a rough marble, than from a bad sketch of another. All things then considered, I conclude that the religion introduced by Numa, was among the first causes of the happiness of that city, because what causes good order makes good fortune, and from good fortune is acquired only the happy success of undertakings. And as the observance of Divine worship is the cause of the greatness of republics, so contempt of this is the cause of their ruin. Because where the fear of God is wanting, either that kingdom becomes ruined, or it is sustained by the fear of a prince who supplies the want of religion. And as the lives of princes are short, that kingdom will soon become lost, after their virtue is missing. Whence it arises, that kingdoms, which depend solely upon the virtue of one man, last but a short time; because his virtue ceases with his life, and it seldom happens that it is revived with the succession, as Dante wisely says:—

'Rade volte discende per li rami
L'umana probitate, e questo vuole
Quel che la dà, perchè da lui si chiami [1].'

It is not then for the benefit of a republic or a kingdom, to have a prince who governs prudently whilst

[1] Human probity seldom ascends to the branches;—and this he wills who gives it, because by him the possessor is elected.

he lives, but one who governs in such a manner, that dying, he still maintains his government. Although unpolished men are more easily led to a new order and opinion, it is not on this account impossible to persuade even civilized men of it, who presume to be not uncultivated. To the Florentine people it did not appear a mark of their being either ignorant or unpolished, that they should be persuaded by brother Girolamo Savonarola that he spake with God. I do not mean to decide whether he was true or not, because of such a man one ought to speak only with reverence. But I merely say, that infinite numbers believed him, without their having seen any thing extraordinary to make them believe him; because his life, his learning, and the cause which he took up, were sufficient to make him quickly believed[2].'

This extract puts us at once in possession of the philosophy of the case, the circumstances of the republic, the position of Lorenzo, and the relation in which he and it stood in connexion with the extraordinary man, the mystery of whose birth, life, and death, we are endeavouring to interpret.

[2] *Discorsi di Niccolo Machiavelli* sopra le deche di Tito Livio, l. i. c. xii.

CHAPTER IV.

DEATH OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

Description of Savonarola's person—His rival the preacher Mariano da Genezano—Monastic Reform—Novices—Conversation—Savonarola's abstemious habits—Rebukes two Abbots—His Chastity—Visits Bologna—The Princess Bentivogli—Humility—Personal oratory—The Bible—Prediction of the Scourge—State of Christendom—Relative positions of Lorenzo and Savonarola—Three political factions—Lorenzo's sickness, interview with Savonarola, and death—Savonarola's vision.

SAVONAROLA'S portrait has been drawn by his friends. He was, we are told, of middling stature, rather small than large, but erect and easy; fair, almost florid in complexion, with a high bold forehead remarkably furrowed; his eyes were brilliant, and of such a blue as the ancients called glauci, shadowed by long reddish eye-lashes; his nose was prominent and aquiline, which added much to his beauty; his face was rather plump than thin, his cheeks somewhat rounded, and a full under-lip gave sweetness to his countenance; his face was well-placed, and every other part of his person proportioned and firmly knit, exhibiting in all his gestures and movements an air of gentleness and gracefulness. His hands were bony, and so little covered with flesh, that when held against the light they seemed almost transparent; his long spreading fingers ended in very pointed nails. His carriage was upright, his manners grave, equal, reso-

lute, tempered by humble courtesy, polished and agreeable in every action.

Such was the person of Savonarola—such a mould and style of man as was calculated to make a strong popular impression. Such was the man who had turned a jealous eye upon the authority of the Medici as hostile to liberty,—and had accordingly on his induction to the priorate of San Marco, refused to recognize Lorenzo as the head of the republic. Needful it was that Lorenzo should find some means of diminishing the influence of the learned monk whom he had so incautiously patronized. The preacher already mentioned, Mariano da Genezano, naturally seemed to offer the readiest instrument for effecting this purpose. A description of Mariano's style of oratory is on record, and is now adopted, that the reader may have the means of contrasting him with his greater rival, Savonarola, who was soon to enter against him in the lists of eloquence and theology. 'His address,' says Poliziano, 'was striking, and his eye marked intelligence. My expectations were raised. He began—I was attentive. A clear voice—select expression—elevated sentiment. He divides his subject—I perceive his distinctions. Nothing perplexed, nothing impaired, nothing languid. He unfolds the web of his argument—I am enthralled. He refutes the sophism—I am freed. He introduces a pertinent narration—I am interested. He modulates his voice—I am charmed. He is jocular—I smile. He presses me with serious truths —I yield to their force. He addresses the passions—the tears glide down my cheeks. He raises his voice in anger—I tremble and wish myself away.'

Notwithstanding this high and deserved praise, Mariano was, after all, only a preacher to superfine wits and polished worldlings, willing enough to talk of sin in the abstract, but unwilling to have their

own and other people's sins exposed to censure in order to repentance: critics, who well-pleased weighed the preacher's discourse by sounds and syllables, through which the word of God might not reach the heart. Mariano himself, because he would flatter the world, and had an immoderate vanity to be flattered himself, trusted to temporary effects, without troubling himself or his hearers by exciting conscientious conviction. To him Lorenzo now applied, for opposing Savonarola, and showing by proof that his manner of preaching was not only wholly fruitless for good, but sowed the seeds of contention among the people. Mariano undertook the task, and on Ascension day, 1491, preached in the church of San Gallo, from this text—'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.' —(Acts i. 7.) He warmed, however, so much in his discourse, and spake with such passionate indiscretion, that many of his early adherents left him. The contents of Mariano's sermon having been repeated to Savonarola, he, eight days after, preached on the same text, treated it in a scriptural manner, and concluded with an apostrophe to his absent opponent, among other things, reminding Mariano that only a few days before he had borne witness to the fruitfulness of Savonarola's manner of preaching according to the Scriptures, and even declared his own readiness to lend a hand in this self-same way to the awakening of the people. 'How hast thou, then, my brother!' exclaimed Savonarola, 'so suddenly changed thy mind and thy heart?' Mariano now learned that he had undertaken a dangerous task in competing with a superior, and to preserve his credit from further loss, gave up the contest. Subsequently, however, he went to Rome, and resolved on becoming the bitterest and principal enemy of Savonarola.

Nor was Savonarola without other enemies in

ecclesiastical quarters, for he had already commenced as a Reformer, not only of the State but of the Church. In his own convent, there were many whose enthusiasm was insufficient to support the austere rule of the order, after the manner of St. Dominic and St. Catherine of Sienna, which the prior was intent on reviving, and already, indeed, enforced by his own example as well as by precept. To such weaker brethren the stern piety of Savonarola was a constant reproach. They were, perhaps, too much disposed to idleness; he, on the contrary, slept only four hours, was present day and night in choir at all sacred offices, and gave audience at fixed periods to every one who desired his help in difficult cases of conscience.

Savonarola, nevertheless, had his seasons of recreation. Though his leisure was brief, and seldom, he passed it with the novices. Frequently he said to the older Fathers, 'Do you wish I should preach well? Give me time to converse with my children!' It was the special delight of Savonarola to discourse with the budding intelligence touching divine things and the sacred Scriptures. 'In this way,' said Savonarola, 'I have learned much, for God ofttimes speaks and expounds his revelations by these simple youths, as by pure vessels full of the Holy Spirit.'

In this practice and in these remarks, Savonarola shows the high quality of the wisdom that possessed him. Conversation in itself is pregnant with the highest evolutions—conversation with the young will educe the purest, the subtlest, and most oracular utterances of philosophical and religious truth. The experiment has been made even lately on very little children with remarkable success. Of these advantages Plato was sufficiently aware, and Jesus emphatically said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' The greatest

poet of modern times expresses the same reverence for childhood, and from its phenomena gladly receives intimations of the soul's immortality. 'Take heed,' said our Redeemer, 'take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones—for I say unto you, that in heaven their Angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.' O thus, if Savonarola was a severe man, still, in the adoption of these divine sentiments as taught by the earliest, and in the anticipation of them as held by the latest teachers of mankind, he showed a pathetic tenderness, a simplicity of disposition, as well as a sublimity of character, which only belongs to the best and the wisest, and can be excelled by none.

Savonarola was accustomed also to visit the cells of the monks, not occasionally only, but frequently and statedly. He listened to their conversation, or enquired into the subject of it. Had it concerned eternity? did that high question now occupy their thoughts? He kindled and excited them to greater animation, mingling in it and reminding them that God was present. Had they not been thus occupied? did meaner themes engage them? Then, with peculiar adroitness, he suggested another argument, directed their attention to celestial things, and changed the strain to holy themes. This he did, without producing embarrassment, accustoming thus all the brethren of his convent to spiritual discourse.

Savonarola was severely abstemious; he desired the coarsest and most patched clothing. Two abbots of Vallambrosa were once conversing with him about the Reformation of the monasteries — Savonarola glanced at their cowls, which were of beautiful velvet, and smiled. The abbots knew his meaning, and blushed—so much virtue yet remained with them. At length, they gained courage, and ventured to remonstrate.

'Brother Girolamo! marvel not at the fineness of our cowls, they last so much the longer!'

Whereto the Prior answered—'What a pity San Benedetto and San Gio Gualbert knew not this secret! They would else have worn the same!'

Such gentle irony was sufficient rebuke, and they were silent.

None ever doubted of the chastity of Savonarola. This is a point that merits deep consideration. When preaching at Brescia, Savonarola had exclaimed, 'The chastity of the cloister is slain!' Had not the celibacy of the clergy become a futile pretext, provoking fornication and adultery, and encouraging concubinage? Had not the Church become a brothel? was not the Church of Rome even the Mother of Harlots? Was it not written on her front, blazoned shamelessly on the folds of her tiara? Did she any longer attempt to conceal it? was not the veil altogether withdrawn? Innocent VIII. regarded as no crime what he had inherited as a custom. The clergy were rendered dissolute by an absurd regulation, which outraged nature without ministering to grace, and violated the precept of Scripture, declaring, that 'Marriage is honourable in all.' The cloisters were grossly immoral — most odious practices were indulged — all due to what Luther calls 'the hell of celibacy.' Savonarola had not arrived at this perception; he was a monk. He thought it right to take the vow of chastity—he had taken it, and he kept it. In all the relations of life, he was a sincere man; and it was this which made him sternly heroic—which fitted him for a Reformer—which predisposed him for the martyr's crown.

Such are the relations in which Savonarola stands connected with those who now ostensibly minister at the altar of God, or affect to meditate in the

retreats of piety. He is a prophet among priests and monks—an apostle in the midst of apostates—a champion of truth numbered with liars—a believer fallen into the camp of practical, if not theoretic, atheists—a victor, ere long to be a victim.

But not the less he performs his mission—he continues his labours. We find him now commencing an explanation of the Book of Genesis, which occupies him nearly two years. He had lately interpreted the last book of the Bible—he now returns to the first; but while thus engaged, he is summoned to Bologna. For a long while the people there had wished to hear again the preacher, now famous, who had sometime been a student in that place. During the Lent of 1492, Savonarola, in company with one of his brethren of the cloister, freely accepted their repeated invitation. At Bologna his sermons meet with a good reception, and find many kindred spirits. Yet Savonarola feels himself cramped by his change of position. Willing to overlook faults where he is only a visitor, yet, notwithstanding all his desire to the contrary, he cannot but perceive many moral transgressions, without being able to attack them in his accustomed manner. At this he grieves the more, when he reflects, that here too, where he had received his own earlier monastic education, the cloister severity and simplicity is missing. To return to San Marco, becomes accordingly his most anxious desire. But a singular occurrence at last gives Savonarola an opportunity of again showing himself, even here, as the strict preacher of duty. The princess Bentivoglio, whose husband conducted the affairs of the city, has come often, with a great train, to hear the mighty preacher, but makes a general practice of not arriving till the commencement of the sermon. Savonarola, on one occasion, utters a public request, that for the future all persons will be present before the sermon begins.

This gentle hint, however, is found to be unavailing. Savonarola accordingly beseeches the lady in private not to continue to disturb the devotions of the assembled multitude. The lady, as might be expected, despising the remonstrance, will still appear with all that bustle which her retinue cannot help making. At length the preacher, one day full of holy indignation, breaks out at her arrival with the words—'Behold! here comes the evil spirit to disturb the word of God!' The protection of his order and his calling, however, shields him from any violence that the indignant lady may meditate. At the close of his last sermon, announcing the period of his departure, Savonarola is careful to demand whether any one had any charge against him—adding pointedly, that he had no intention of dying in Bologna.

If the preaching of Savonarola had only been remarkable for incidents of this kind, we should be compelled to rank his pulpit eloquence as simply popular and democratic. That it was, however, of a higher character we have many evidences. He knew too the value of humility, and the boldness with which he spake was not from pride, but from duty. 'If,' says he, in a treatise on the subject, 'thy virtue is unknown, seek not that it should be known, because a treasure discovered is in great peril; and if thy virtue is known, refer it to God, and seek not by word or action to make it better known or understood by those who are not acquainted with it. Humility requires that when a man hears himself praised, particularly if for virtues he does not possess, having the good opinion of men undeservedly, he should grieve at it, and try to diminish this reputation without sinning, or rather to equal or exceed it by virtuous acts. . . . . Always avoiding to do things which are unusual in the sight of men, which attract admi-

ration or praise, living with propriety among them, according to the ordinary course of those who are upright and worthy, not dressing more expensively and sumptuously, nor, on the contrary, more shabbily than becomes thy station. Above all, not exceeding or failing in conspicuous matters, and in resting or moving, in manner and ornaments, in speech, and in all other things keeping in the medium, because extremes are much observed in such affairs, but the medium as most usual is not remarked.'

There was, nevertheless, much in Savonarola's pulpit oratory that was personal. He had to contend not only for his cause, but for his authority to pursue it in the manner he adopted. Sometimes he had to reply to the accusation of having caused divisions. 'Why,' he demanded—'Because I come to bring truth into the world? They who are of the world follow lies, therefore there must be divisions.' In defence of his alleged claims, he would say, 'First I was a preacher, therefore am I sent, and if I now prophesy, you have nothing to object to me!' Actual reformations attended Savonarola's preaching, to which he was not slow in appealing. 'Why dost thou believe the prophets and apostles? answer—because they wrought miracles. Who told thee the miracles? How did those who told thee, know them? Wouldst thou that I should tell thee wherefore thou believest them? Because a light from above has been given thee, which makes thee believe. Besides, I see none but bad men deny the Gospel, and it makes those who believe it good. God would not give truth into the hands of the wicked, and not to the righteous.'

Savonarola distinguished three modes of inspiration. 'God,' he said, 'infuses it into the soul; gives wisdom as He did to Solomon and David; or visions by means of the angelic spirits. In each of these ways

I have been always assured of the truth by the beforementioned illumination.' The usefulness of prophecy he thus illustrates. 'If thou shouldst see a wolf in the shepherd's clothing among the sheep, and one should teach thee, and say beware of him who appears to thee a pastor, for he is a wolf; wouldst thou not warn the flock, that they may not follow him?' When reproached with having attacked priests, monks, seculars, and even the pope, he replied, 'I have named no one, they judge themselves.' Savonarola was energetic in commending the Bible as the only code of morals. 'People of Florence!' he would exclaim, 'give yourselves to the study of the sacred Scriptures! The first blessing is understanding the sacred Scriptures. Let us publicly confess the truth, the sacred Scriptures have been locked up—this light has been almost extinguished among men! Has it not been set aside? left in the dust? No longer studied, nothing has been attended to but poetry and vanities. In the pulpit, nothing is quoted but Plato, Aristotle, and a thousand trivialities. A worldly priest saying once to a religious man, 'We are the gods of the people!'—the latter answered, 'Father, it is written the gods of the people are demons.' Whenever it is clearly seen that the commands of superiors are contrary to the commandments of God, especially to the law of charity, no one should obey in this case. See, now, is not this Book to the purpose? Does it not speak exactly of our times and of our persecutions? But because I will not keep you longer this morning, I will say but one word, and send you home. What say'st thou, Brother? what shall this word be? Would I could give thee better news than I have! But there is no help for it. This night have we received no better tidings than these. To you the good, the upright in heart, I say ever peace! Doubt not, ye righteous! the

Lord will give you peace. Florentines! I say to the wicked, ye know it is a proverb, misery comes by sin! Go, read; when the Hebrews did right and loved God, they had always prosperity—on the contrary, when they committed iniquity, God prepared a scourge for them! Florence! what hast thou done? what sins hast thou committed? how dost thou stand before God? Shall I tell thee? Alas! the measure is full! thy plague is at its height! Florence, it is full! Look! look! a heavy Scourge. Lord! thou dost bear me witness, that with my Brethren, I have striven to bear up against this burden, this destruction, by fervent prayer; we can do no more, we have entreated the Lord, that at least He would change this Sword into a pestilence. Whether we have obtained that mercy or not ye will perceive. Let each one make confession, let each one be ever prepared for whatever may be done by the Lord.

'I can no more—my strength fails! O slumber no longer, Lord! upon that cross. Grant these our petitions! O Lord! look upon the face of thine Anointed. O glorious virgin! O saints! O ye blessed in Paradise! O angels! O archangels! O all ye company of heaven! intercede for us with the Lord, that He delay not to be gracious to us! Seest thou not, O God! that these bad men mock, they scorn us, they suffer not that any should help thy servants? Every one derides us—we have become the reproach of the world. We have prayed—oh! how many tears we shed—how many sighs we breathe! Where is thy providence, thy love, thy faithfulness?

'O Lord! delay not, that the unbelievers and the wicked may not say, 'where is the God of these men, who have so often repented and fasted?' Thou seest the bad become every day worse, and now they seem to have become incorrigible. Stretch

'forth, stretch forth thy hand, thy mighty arm! I can do no more—I think not what more to say. There is nothing left for me but to weep. I would dissolve in tears upon this pulpit. I ask not, O Lord! that thou shouldst hear us for our merits, but for thy mercy, for the love of thy Son. Look upon the face of thine Anointed, have compassion on thy sheep. Dost thou see them here, all afflicted, all persecuted? Dost thou not love them, O my God? Didst thou not become incarnate for them? Wert thou not crucified, didst thou not die for them? If I cannot prevail—if this work is too much for me, recall my soul—take me away, O Lord! release me from life. What have thy sheep done? They have done nothing. I am the guilty one; yet, O Lord! have not respect to my sins, have respect this once to thy loving-kindness, thy tenderness, thy bowels of mercies, and let us feel all thy compassion!'

Such was the style of Savonarola's pulpit orations. At the conclusion he would frequently descend from the pulpit bathed in tears—amid the sobs and groans of the congregation.

The prophetic intimation contained in the discourses above quoted, touching the Scourge that was commissioned to punish Italy, and Florence in particular, for her transgressions, alarmed the hearers of Savonarola. Publicly and privately Savonarola persisted, as by Divine command, in repeatedly admonishing the people under his teaching, of the necessity of a religious moral life to individuals, and of a political reform to the republic in general. Indeed, he was wont to assert that the death of Lorenzo, whenever it happened, would be the commencement of a state revolution in Florence. The accomplishment of his prediction, however, both in regard to the reform of the Church and that of the State, was connected, in the mind of Savonarola, with the ap-

pearance of a foreign conqueror in Italy. There was much in her foreign relations to justify this apprehension even as a probable conjecture. For more than ten years the claim of the younger house of Anjou to the kingdom of Naples and Jerusalem, had been revived with earnestness, and Louis XI. of France, had in consequence been often invited under favourable conditions into Italy—but died without enforcing satisfaction of his alleged right; and was succeeded in the year 1492 by Charles VIII., who, fired by youthful ambition, resolved to win by battle what had been withheld from honourable negociation. The pope likewise soon found it his interest to fan the flame that was thus kindling. Not content with protecting Italy from Turkish invasion by a treaty with the Sultan Bajazet, whose brother Zizim was sent to Rome as a hostage, Innocent VIII. had excommunicated Ferdinand, king of Naples, for refusing an accustomed tribute to the Roman see. Glad, therefore, was the pontiff of the opportunity afforded him by Charles' ambition, to strengthen his own hands, and favoured the latter's enterprise against that kingdom, making a separate treaty with Milan and Venice, which alarmed Naples and Florence. But soon after, on Ferdinand's death, and the reconcilement of his son to the Vatican, his holiness tried to dissuade Charles from the enterprize; vain attempt! And thus at length, though beginning with the papal concurrence, that very enterprize became part of the opposition which ere long, both spiritually and politically, arrayed itself against the power of Rome, which had for some time assumed a secular, in the place of its ancient ecclesiastical character, and accordingly began to be treated by other princedoms as one on the same level with themselves.

Lorenzo was as aware of this tendency as Savonarola, and indeed clearly saw how that Christendom,

south and north, was united to counteract the authority of the pope, and how that the secular power was rapidly participating the ecclesiastical revenues and rights, as well as substituting its own policy for that of the Church.

'Ferdinand of Naples,' said Lorenzo, 'will make no difficulty of promising Innocent VIII., but by and by, when his obligations ought to be fulfilled, he will meet with indulgence, as kings invariably do at the hands of the popes.' Lorenzo likewise pursued the same course himself, notwithstanding his alliance with the pontiff. Following the example of greater sovereigns, he regarded only so much of the papal mandates as he pleased. The popes, as we have said, had also begun to act as temporal rather than spiritual rulers. Innocent VIII. was the last pontiff who cared for attempting any resistance to Turkish influence. He sounded, indeed, like most of his predecessors, the trumpet of a general crusade against the infidel—and addressed the European ambassadors in the usual strain, and with the usual inefficacy. What answer he received from some Italian states, served to enrich the apostolical treasury, and enabled him to increase his personal expenses, and engage in family hostilities against the king of Naples. The head of the Church, indeed, was now only expected at most to devote himself to the interests of her temporal dominions. Thus an influential speaker in the council of Basle ventured the assertion—that 'formerly he was of opinion that it would be well were the temporal power wholly dissevered from the spiritual—but now he had learned that virtue without strength is ridiculous, that the pope of Rome without the hereditary possessions of the Church, would be but the lackey of kings and princes—and that it was not very objectionable that a pope should have sons, who might uphold him

against tyrants.' From this step the next was easy. It was soon considered as an ordinary thing that a pope should promote the interests of his own family, and he would have been censured if he had not done so. 'Others,' said Lorenzo, in a letter to Innocent VIII., 'have not so long postponed their efforts to become popes, and have given themselves little concern to evince such delicacy and forbearance as your holiness has manifested for such a length of time. Now is your holiness not only excused before God and man, but one might perhaps even venture to blame this punctilious conduct, and ascribe it to another motive. Zeal and duty force it upon me as a point of conscience to remind your holiness, that no man is immortal, that a pope's importance is just what he himself chooses to make it; he cannot render his dignity hereditary: nothing can he call his own but the honours and the benefactions he has bestowed on his kindred.'

Reverting to the political relation which had existed between Lorenzo the politician, and Savonarola the prophet, whose predictions were not lightly esteemed either by the people of Florence or their chiefs, it must be remarked that Lorenzo himself began to perceive the inherent insufficiency of art and philosophy alone for the security of a state; and feeling the want of a higher influence, clearly cherished a secret sentiment that Savonarola was the agent divinely appointed to supply it. The licentious life they failed to restrain, religion was needed to prohibit. Its first advances were unwelcome, but its presence soon became necessary for the satisfaction even of what at first opposed it. Savonarola besides would only look on Lorenzo in his public capacity, as an innovator on the original republican form of the Florentine constitution, at a crisis when such innovation was perilous to the safety of the state, and

when the family of the Medici had degenerated from its primitive virtue and wealth, and consequently suffered in its independence and authority. Of this Lorenzo was fully conscious, and had been from his entrance into life—his position private and public was always beset with difficulties. For the rest, he only the more respected Savonarola for disdaining to flatter him in the first instance, and this respect increased when Savonarola became his decided political opponent.

There were three political factions in Florence, striving for supremacy. The first was named Frateschi (brethren), or Piagnone (mourners). These were the zealous advocates of liberty, who had not only united for the restoration of the republic, but went about constantly and loudly lamenting the corruption of morals, and the decay of prosperity in the city. To counteract the vice and the ruin that prevailed, they proposed the severest discipline. They were considerable in numbers, character, and talent. At their head was Savonarola.

The second party was named by the first—(having no name of its own), Arrabbiati (the Frantic), or Compagnacci, from the assistance they derived from companies of young nobles, who enlisted themselves in its service. These aristocrats, under the cover of political partizanship, indulged violent and unbridled passions. Their aim was to establish an oligarchy. They were disgusted with the pseudo irresponsible monarchy of the Medici — but they dreaded equally the extreme democracy of Savonarola's views. Besides which, the stern and honest monk would have restrained by legislation the licence which they would have wished to set above and beyond law. This restraint could never be permitted by the members of a privileged social order.

The third party—denominated Bigi (grey), was

that of the Medici. They were not strong enough openly to oppose the others, but promoted their own cause by secret intrigues among the magistrates. They joined the Piagnone in the ballot, when the contest was between them and the Compagnacci.

Of the three parties, the first and the third sided against the second; and the second dreaded the first more than the third. There was more sympathy between the two extremes, than there was between the mean and either opposite. And thus it has always been, and is, in the political arena.

The conduct both of Savonarola and Lorenzo, was the result of a deep instinct in the nature of both, and of a law by which their position was necessarily regulated. Neither of them knew this—but not the less they acted on the obscure feelings by which it was represented. Savonarola attracted Lorenzo—but was himself only repelled by the advances of the political ruler. The æsthetic and the ascetic man were mutually related—but there might be no contact.

On his return to Florence, Savonarola saw many good consequences of his unwearied labours, which he resumed with renewed enthusiasm, whilst the novelty and the richness of his conceptions, and the increased boldness of their expression, attracted with greater interest a greater number of hearers. Lorenzo and others of his rank and party, were compelled at least to regard the religious earnestness and the reckless freemindedness of the monk with esteem. Indeed, Lorenzo could not help observing—'Besides this man, I have never seen a true monk.'

In the year 1491, Lorenzo was taken dangerously ill. His sickness continuing, he sought and found relief from the warm baths of Siena and Porrettana. He returned about the beginning of the year 1492 to the business of the state, and resided in the Villa Carreggi, occupying himself mostly in the conversa-

tion of learned friends. Here his malady seized him with renewed force; an insidious fever, which from the beginning puzzled the faculty exceedingly.

The death of Lorenzo was characteristic of the man, accompanied with a splendour that is inconsistent with safety. It was hastened by the empirical application of abnormal means. The magnificent quack by whom he was attended prescribed a specific of amalgamated pearls and jewels—a medicine reserved for the rich, inasmuch as it could not be administered to the poor—but which, instead of healing, increased the patient's disorder.

A sick-bed is the place for reflection. Frequently had Lorenzo expressed a desire for the conversation of that same true monk, and frequently invited him to his couch. Now, his sickness had so much increased, and his life was in such great peril, that he had reason to fear his death was nigh at hand.

Still, as Angelo Poliziano relates, Lorenzo not only showed an extraordinary readiness to die, but a true Christian mental fortitude in dying. Having poured out his heart to Poliziano, and bidden farewell to Prince Giovanni, of Mirandola, he then desired the presence of Savonarola, who could not refuse to attend a fellow-being, though the head of a republic, in his last moments. Taking, however, this opportunity of exhorting Lorenzo to consider himself as if he were then upon his death-bed, Savonarola having commended him to the Divine mercy, and comforted him in the name of the Holy Trinity, proceeded to assure the sufferer, that if he had a strong and living faith, God would and could forgive him. Lorenzo replied, that he had this faith; whereupon Savonarola added, that it was also required of him that he should restore whatever he might have unjustly obtained, or should direct his sons to do so. This also Lorenzo promised. But when

Savonarola proceeded to demand from him that he should reinstate Florence in authority and right of the old republican freedom, Lorenzo maintained a stubborn silence. Savonarola instantly left him, it is even said, without giving his absolution.

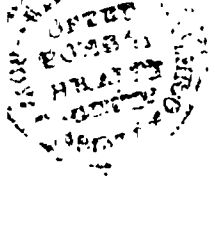
Lorenzo, as might be suspected, had a sufficient number of flatterers. Among these was Angelo Poliziano, the confidant of his studies and his family interests—a man without religion, or respect for its ordinances—and who became Lorenzo's biographer, or rather panegyrist; one so blinded by party zeal, that his statements are not at all to be depended on. Thus, for instance, he declares that Savonarola, notwithstanding the silent refusal of Lorenzo to set free the city from the evil of usurped authority, administered to him the sacrament of absolution. Pico asserts the contrary, and his assertion agrees best with the character of the man. There is every reason to believe, from the disposition of both parties, that Lorenzo sought with prayerful entreaty, and that Savonarola denied with spiritual indignation, the blessing of the Church to the mortal who refused on his death-bed to make a righteous concession. On the other hand, Burlammacchi, a biographer of Savonarola, relates that, in addition to the conversation already detailed, Savonarola charged Lorenzo with three special crimes—the plundering of Volterra, whereby many noble ladies were outraged, and other execrable deeds were committed—the robbery of the Monte di fanciulli, through which many noble virgins lost their dowery; and, finally, the much innocent blood of the Pazzi, that was shed through perjury. But these are evidently subsequent adornments of the original tale, and gross exaggerations of the facts—so hard it is to get at the truth from partisans. In such cases, the characters of the principals furnish the best criteria of judgment.

Lorenzo died on the 8th of April, 1492. In the night of the last Advent Sunday of that same year, Savonarola relates that he saw, in vision—a Hand from heaven, which held a sword with this inscription; 'The Sword of the Lord upon the earth soon and sudden.' The hand and arm, however, appeared to proceed from three persons, whose countenances were enveloped in a bright veil. The first of whom spake thus: 'My people has forgotten for unnumbered days my commandments.' The second replied, 'I will tread them, and destroy them, and they shall not move me to compassion.' The third rejoined, 'I will remember them who have held my commandments.' Then sounded from the whole three countenances together, upon the entire circle of the earth—'Hear, all inhabitants of the earth, thus speaks the Lord, in his holy zeal! See the day will come when I will draw my Sword upon you. Turn ye then to me ere my wrath be full, and trouble comes when ye shall seek peace, and find it not. Rejoice ye, ye righteous! yet prepare your soul for trouble by reading and prayer. But ye who are the servants of sin, harden yourselves still more. Yet know that your bodies and your souls rest in my hands. I will, in a short time, chasten your bodies with a scourge, but your souls shall perish in the eternal fire!'

Savonarola continues: 'Then I saw a glorious temple of marble, adorned with gold, the columns of porphyry, the doors of precious stones, the sanctuary of mosaic. In the night, however, many came, destroyed the temple, and began to build a new one, of wood, painted like marble and porphyry, covered over with gold and silver. I saw the priests in their robes approaching with silver staves, and the people praising with joy the beauty of the new temple. But soon the ceiling fell in, and overwhelmed all. The first

temple is the apostolic Church, built of living stones of believers, who, united in love, were one heart and one soul in Christ, as the corner-stone of the building. The temple shone with the gold of heavenly wisdom, the columns were the prophets and apostles. But Satan laboured to destroy this temple. For this purpose he took the lukewarm ones, the false brothers in sheeps' clothing, who fast, pray, give alms, and externally comport themselves as Christians, but through whose hypocrisy the Church falls into destruction. The apostles and prophets are no more —the columns of the Church are thrown down—the evangelic doctrine is no longer heard—the gold of the temple fails, the Divine wisdom which enlightens and quickens the heart. The roof of the Church is broken—the pious priests and princes are gone. It is no longer an united body; for every one seeks only his own. The walls of the Church are undermined; for where is the righteousness of princes, where the fidelity of the clergy and priests? Rather they make a boast of their wickedness; curses and oaths are to them a sign of manly courage; extravagance passes for liberality; fraud they name prudence. On the other hand, they have a new church erected of wood, that is, of Christians who are doomed to hell-fire. Yet is it beautifully painted and gilded, has much external embellishment, golden candlesticks, and beautiful robes. But I tell you, the roof will break in, and bury the heavy sins of the clergy and princes, with all their pomp. See, the wicked prelates! because they fear that the people may withdraw themselves from their obedience, they proceed, like the tyrants, who destroy the good and just, to imprison them or to remove them from their offices; abolish good laws and manners, and entertain the people with holidays and sports; that they may not reflect on innovations. Thus it is also in the Church of Christ.

The good preachers are removed, the guidance of ecclesiastical affairs is not entrusted to them; good laws and manners are abolished; and, on the contrary, holidays and ceremonies introduced, which thrust out or destroy those which God has commanded. O Italy! for thy sins this trouble will come. O Florence! for thy sins this chastisement will come. O Clergy! because of thee comes this storm. I tell you, there will come a storm, like the vision of Elias, and the storm will shatter the mountains! Over the Alps will one come hither against Italy, like the Cyrus, of whom Isaiah wrote. O! ye high, ye wise, and ye also of low estate, the mighty hand of the Lord hangs above you! Therefore has the Lord visited you, that He may have mercy on you. Turn ye then to the Lord, your God, with all your heart; for He is gracious and merciful. But if ye will not obey, He will turn away his eyes from you!'



CHAPTER V.

THE INVASION OF CHARLES VIII.

Apparent prosperity of Florence at the death of Lorenzo—Civil contest—Savonarola's prominence—Pietro de Medici's feeble rule—Death of Pope Innocent VIII.—Infamous character of Pope Alexander VI.—Satan in the seat of Christ.—Charles the Eighth of France—Conduct of Pietro—Savonarola's speech to the king at Pisa—Pietro's expulsion from Florence—Charles VIII. and the Pisans—Charles VIII. and the Florentines—Savonarola's remonstrance—The departure of the French.

So flourishing and fortunate appeared the state of Florence in the last year of Lorenzo's life, that a contemporary writer maintains that no such happy condition of things had for a thousand years gladdened the whole of Italy; yet in reality, the bases of this seeming prosperity were insecure and feeble to the last degree.

So long as Lorenzo (who followed therein the fundamental principles of his grandfather, for the maintenance of a sort of balance of power between the Florentine republic and the other Italian states) could constitute himself the centre of the political system, the house of the Medici, whatever were the private necessities of the family, might support the

external shows of magnificence for which it had been so long remarkable, and which shone with such peculiar intensity, being concentrated, as it were, in that last expense which adorned the death-bed of Lorenzo—that peculiar prescription so costly, yet so fatal. With the death of Lorenzo, however, the gorgeous spell is dissolved; nor may the remaining members of that once-powerful family escape the dreaded consequences. Not only the diminished influence and enfeebled power, but also the despicable government of the succeeding Medici, led men to predict an unavoidable storm, that was not long in discharging its accumulated terrors.

Now that Lorenzo was dead, Savonarola took a more prominent part in the civil contest which succeeded. Not only in the Duomo and in San Marco, which were crowded, but in the public squares he harangued assembled thousands. Bitterly—bitterly he inveighed against the corruptions of the pontifical court, the general depravity of manners, and the domineering spirit of the Medici. The orator was in the ascendant; nor was the prophet in abeyance. Visions and dreams came in aid of his argument—prophecies of the fall of the Medici and of future miseries, to the utterance and accomplishment of which friends and foes alike testify. The latter attribute them to his extraordinary sagacity and extensive information—the former to immediate inspiration; both, probably, considering as deliberate assertions many things which were but scintillations of his fiery eloquence, and which rather threatened than foretold the disastrous future.

Pietro de' Medici succeeded his father Lorenzo in the government of Florence, but was ill-calculated either to attain or preserve the sovereignty of the state. He held the reins feebly, and pursued a policy opposed to what his father had commenced,

and adopted the counsels of the inexperienced and the young. He was himself not without talent and humane culture, but he was without reflection and decision. Too fond of idle parade and the free indulgence of sensual pleasures, he offended high and low by inordinate pride and insolence. He had committed the government into the hands of his own friends, among whom, his private secretary, Pietro da Bibiena, as if to make it more odious, exercised great influence. This naturally led to much disappointment on the part of those who had expected situations under the new government; yet these would not have so suddenly shown their resentment, if Pietro's undisguised efforts to assume the princedom of Florence had not made his rule so hateful, that men would rather submit to the dominion of a foreigner, than the tyranny of a fellow-citizen.

The vision of Savonarola concerning the sword of the Lord that was to come soon and suddenly upon the earth—of the trouble that was prepared for Italy—the chastisement that awaited Florence—the storm that was to fall on the Church—of him who should come over the Alps, like another Cyrus, against Italy—had relation to the foreign policy of Florence. Shortly after Lorenzo's death, in July of the same year, died Innocent VIII., and was succeeded (as if to show that the moral apostacy had now passed its climax) by Alexander VI., who soon applied himself entirely to the secular business of his elevated position, and relinquished even the appearance of religious motives. As Roderigo Borgia, the new pontiff, had already made himself infamous for his debaucheries, and on the death of his predecessor felt no shame in actually purchasing the seat of papal power, now more temporal than spiritual, to which he had aspired, and which he but employed to the end of founding a great inalienable sovereignty for his family

in the domains of the Church; yet this man, who has been justly called the scourge of Christendom, and the opprobrium of the human race, was on his election by the people of Rome hailed as a deity. On no other occasion, it is said, had the Holy City arrayed herself in such splendour, or descended to such loathsome adulation as on that, when she placed in the apostolical chair the most profligate of mankind —a man in whom there was no sincerity, no shame, no truth, no honesty, no faith—a being of an insatiable spirit, an immeasurable ambition, of a more than barbarous cruelty, and a worse than natural lust—in short, an incarnation of the satanic spirit itself, who, having purchased the vacant chair of the apostate vicar of Christ, despised mankind too much to flatter their mock reverence of piety, by playing the hypocrite on the desecrated throne of superstition. But in the person of Charles VIII. such men as Savonarola recognized the divinely appointed opponent to the infernal usurper, who had dared to occupy the highest station in God's temple, now perverted to the performance of undisguised evil.

Charles VIII. was not to be amused by the artifices of Rome; but at length, finding Venetians, Florentines, Lanese, and the pope all against him, he was fain to abandon the project. But he was again incited thereto by the representations of the anti-Medicean party at Florence, and by the suggestions of Ludovico Sforza, who counselled an attack on Naples, in order to revenge his own quarrels with Ferdinand. Pietro, too, had excited the jealousy of Ludovico, by secretly forming an intimate connexion with the king of Naples and the pope, and by letting it appear, that to secure the supreme dominion of his native place, he was willing to relax the authority that kept Italy under wholesome control. When, however, partly through his own carelessness, partly

through his want of sufficient means, Pietro had done nothing for the defence of the Tuscan borders, and Charles, without any opposition, had advanced against the Florentine dominions, and even conquered a frontier town: then Pietro saw no other way out of his difficulties, than by imitating the example (which he had before despised) of his father. Accordingly, he threw himself into the camp of Charles, as Lorenzo had done formerly into the court of Naples, for negotiating the conditions of peace. But Pietro was not Lorenzo, wanting both the skill and boldness of his father; and imitations are seldom fortunate; no two cases being perhaps alike in all particulars, and most differing in points of essential importance. With imprudent precipitance Pietro conceded the exorbitant demands of the king, incurring derision even in the enemy's camp for his folly; while in Florence, the dishonourable and informal step he had ventured, was heard of with marked astonishment, and censured with loud disapprobation. Yet so blindly he proceeded, that ere his return to Florence, he sought to prosecute further negotiations with Charles, by means of an embassy under Pietro Capponi, then bound for Pisa, where Charles had already retired, and whither Capponi himself had desired Savonarola to meet him. Meanwhile Savonarola had been standing, like a faithful guardian, on the watch-tower of his country's liberties; and, taught by observation, believed that the moment was come, when God would perform a great work for Florence. Savonarola was not only a saint, but a patriot, and the reproach of the city smote him to the heart. If for the present he might hardly distinguish between things ecclesiastical and political, it was because the Lord had decreed not alone to purify the Church by separating it from the world, but to create a new Church on the earth. At any rate, we cannot but

admire the earnestness and vital spirit of the energetic individual who could embrace both in one capacious heart, and dare always entertain the hope of effecting a common reformation for both. Such was the success of his remonstrances, that the people of Florence had determined on sending an embassy to Charles, for the purpose of demanding the restoration of Pisa, and Savonarola was of course named for one of the five orators on this important occasion. The embassy sought the king at Lucca, but found him, as Savonarola had anticipated, at Pisa. There, (according to Nardi,) Savonarola had convenient speech, in the vulgar tongue, with the king, whom, in the name of the embassy, he saluted not only as the servant and delegate of God, who for high designs was to appear in Italy, but withal, reminded him of the duty that belonged to such a mission, which he required him conscientiously to observe, if he would insure the happy issue of his undertaking. He spoke, without pre-meditation, in the following manner:

'Almighty God, in whose hand all might and majesty abide, O Christian king, and great minister of Divine justice! declares his infinite goodness towards his creatures in two-fold manner; by mercy and by justice. By the former, in that he attracts the creature to his love; by the latter, in that he leaves the creature in his own unworthiness. Both are, however, always and everywhere united; they go with one another, though under various conditions and operations. To mercy, namely, it belongs, that God patiently bears the fault and transgression: in his long-suffering he permits to the sinner time for repentance, solicits him in a friendly manner, and seeks to lead him back by the gentlest means. To justice, however, belongs, that he bereaves of grace and of light the sinner, who despises all signs of mercy, lets him hurry into the abyss of sin and every

corruption ; and finally, gives him over to the everlasting punishment of hell. After, therefore, the infinite goodness of God, that embraces all men with love, has long-sufferingly borne the heavy sins of Italy, and has invited them for so many long years repeatedly and tenderly by many of his servants to repentance, without its ears having been opened to know the voice of his shepherd,—nay, the Divine long-suffering having been insolently abused, the guilt of its sins daily augmented, and the Divine favour and the holy sacraments with saucy brow disdained :—after all this, the highest Almighty God has determined to proceed henceforth in the way of his justice. Because, however, mercy and justice are, as said, united in all the Divine works, God will, according to his infinite goodness, also declare mercy with justice, and reveal again to his unprofitable servant who now addresses your majesty, this mystery —how that he meditates to reform his Church by means of a great scourge. Which mystery his unprofitable servant, already four years ago, according to the Divine inspiration and revelation vouchsafed to him, announced in the city of Florence ; since when, even to this day, he has not ceased with loud voice to exhort the people to repentance. Bear witness this, the whole city ! bear witness, high and low, young and old, of both sexes ! Of these were several who believe—many continued unbelieving—others even mocked. But God, who cannot lie, has hitherto permitted all things which have been foretold in his word, strictly to follow ; whence we conclude that those things which are foretold, but have not yet happened, will without doubt in like manner receive their fulfilment.

'Never has his unprofitable servant named the name of your majesty ; yet, albeit this has not been permitted to him by the will of God, neverthe-

less it was towards thee that he had beckoned, it was thy advent he had expected. Thus then at last art thou come, O King! as the servant of God—as the servant of justice; and thus blessed be thy coming! With good heart and glad face we accept thee! Thy approach rejoices all the servants of Christ—all who love justice and holy living. For they hope that God by thy hand will bring down the proud, upraise the oppressed, restrain the vicious, advance the virtuous, judge the wronged, renew the old and enfeebled. Come then rejoicingly, confidently and victoriously! As He who conquers by the cross has sent thee for our salvation. Yet hear, further, Christian king! my words, and take them to heart. The servant of God who would, on the behalf of God, the Holy Trinity, unfold this mystery, even he exhorts and admonishes thee, his delegate, in the name of all the heavenly kingdom, that, after his example, thou everywhere exercise mercy. But especially in his city of Florence, which, though it have many sinners, yet numbers not a few servants of God of both sexes, both temporal and spiritual. For these shouldst thou spare the city, that they may pray God for thee, to give a happy issue to thy labours. On the behalf of God, even he, the unprofitable servant, exhorts thee that thou with all diligence protect and defend the innocent, the widows and the orphans, all who need compassion, especially the chastity of the virgins of the God-consecrated cloister, that not through thy guilt sins should increase, by which even thy heaven-conferred might would be infallibly broken. Likewise, he exhorts thee on behalf of God, readily to forgive all injuries, whether received from the Florentine people or otherwise, as done out of ignorance, because they wist not that thou art sent of God. Think on thy Saviour, who compassionately on the cross forgave those who

had crucified Him. I know, O king! if thou observest this, God will increase thy earthly kingdom, give to thee everywhere triumph, and finally bestow on thee his eternal kingdom—He who alone is, He who is blessed and mighty, the King of kings, and Lord of lords! who alone has immortality, and dwells in inaccessible light, whom no man has seen nor can see, to whom be honour and dominion for all eternity: Amen.'

Such was the style in which Savonarola conducted a cause which was mainly entrusted to his wisdom and eloquence. The French courtiers were extraordinarily excited by the words and bearing of a man, who appeared before them not as a politician only, but as a priest and a prophet. Nor did they less admire his courage when he proceeded to condemn the robberies and massacres of which the French troops had been guilty, and to threaten the conqueror with the vengeance of Heaven if he did not restrain such excesses. The calamity thus denounced, was afterwards interpreted to be the death of the Dauphin, but perhaps Savonarola himself had no particular event in view. Such is the superstition of the vulgar mind, that every disaster which befel states or persons threatened by him, was esteemed by his disciples a verification of his words. Convinced himself of the connection that subsists between transgression and punishment, his glowing and rapt speeches transmitted to the hearts of his auditors a vivid conviction of impending vengeance. How the king was affected, and whether the earnest voice by which he had been admonished, left its echoes in his ears for after times, cannot be concluded with exactness, beyond the fact that Charles VIII. showed always afterwards a partiality for Savonarola's person. In all other respects the impression, if made at all, was momentary—the words of the saint found no fitting soil in

the heart of the warrior. The more political object of the embassy Savonarola left almost unattempted, perhaps found it impracticable.

Meantime, Pietro returned to Florence, expecting to reap the reward of his negociations—negociations, by which the interest of his country had been either ignorantly or treacherously sacrificed, by which Florence was to surrender several important forts as hostages, together with Pisa and Livorno. Was it likely that the magistracy of Florence would accede to a compact so dishonourable? No wonder Pietro found all in fermentation, and was met with defiance. This arrogant and ambitious man had now to endure the bitterness of insult. The magistrates, among whom was Jacopo Nerli, a noble and rich young man, refused him admittance into the palace of the Seignory. The common people took to arms, in all directions, and anticipated the troops under Pagolo Orsino, which, by Pietro's appointment, were on the march to his assistance. The Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici attempted to address the excited multitude, but in vain. Moreover, the watchword of the Medici, 'Palle! Palle'!' once potent to collect thousands, now found no echo. On the cloister of San Marco were two monks, the Cardinal's relations, waiting for him with the keys; but in the confusion he missed the appointed door, and fled disguised as a Franciscan into the Apennines. Pietro with his two brothers, Giovanni and Giuliano, were also compelled to flee, and sought refuge in Bologna. The palace of the Medici, the residence of the Cardinal in the suburbs of San Anton, and many houses of the leaders of the Medici party, were given up to plunder. The invaluable treasures of art, which were collected in the palace of Pietro, were scattered; and

[1] The palle d'oro, or golden balls, the arms of the family of Medici.

even the Seignory took their part in the booty, a great number of costly gems, rings, agate-vases, beautiful cut cameos, above three thousand gold and silver coins, and more than twenty thousand ducats of money, which Pietro had placed in the City bank, fell into their hands. Also the master works of art in the garden of San Marco, a monument of the ruling taste of Lorenzo and his father, were destroyed. The fury and plundering propensities of the people knew no bounds—the doors in the Medicean palace were taken off and broken, that the robbers might expedite their business. A certain Balsac, who had arrived before the king in Florence, in order to provide for him sundry articles, mixed among the populace, and appropriated everything that he could get possession of, among other things a golden unicorn, which alone was worth from six to seven thousand ducats. Lorenzo, and Giuliano de' Medici, the grandsons of the brother of Cosimo, returning from exile, to secure their popularity, took down from above the marble portal the Medicean family arms, (which were visible to the people of the whole city,) and set up a white cross instead. They also named themselves anew Popolani, and no more Medici. This happened on November 9, 1494.

On the next day, Savonarola returned to Florence, and immediately exerted his utmost authority to set bounds to the unreined passions of the people. To him many of the friends and adherents of the Medici owed their escape from the fate which had else befallen them.

On the very day that the Medici were expelled from Florence, and a dominion, which had been established for sixty years, was destroyed in one hour, a remarkable event took place at Pisa. When Charles VIII. went to the mass, a great crowd of men and women placed themselves in his way, exclaiming

loudly against the tyranny of the Florentines under which they had long suffered, and cried, 'Freedom! freedom!' The Maitre de Requètes, who was next to the king, understood not the precise meaning of the words, but said, 'Certainly it is a grievous business, the people shall have their desire.' Whereupon the king answered in like manner, that he acquiesced in their demands. Instantly the air was filled with the joyful cry of the people; who then rushed to the bridge over the Arno, tore down the golden Lion, an image of the majesty of Florence, and set up instead the image of the king with the lion at his feet. No doubt the Pisans had found their subjection to Florence not compensated by the protection afforded, and accordingly desired to make separate conditions with the French, in the hope of being afterwards enabled to throw off both yokes, and achieve their independence. Whatever Charles VIII. had promised through Pietro to the Florentines, who would not easily be persuaded to relinquish a possession so valuable, he would seem in this instance to have shown an extraordinary forgetfulness of his contracts—but that on the other hand he probably felt himself very slightly bound by the word he had given to the Pisans. Probably, he was totally indifferent to the claims of either party, thinking only of the manner in which he might advance his own. He placed, in fact, both the parties *hors de combat*—restraining the Florentine troops to their present position, and giving up to the Pisans the old citadel of the City—the new one, a very different affair, and of much greater importance, he kept to himself.

On the 17th November Charles VIII. made his solemn entry into Florence, attended with great pomp, and a martial train:—himself fully armed, gallantly mounted, and gorgeously overcanopied, the reins of his steed being held by a gonfaloniere, whose

banner floated before the monarch as he rode. The gates of San Friano were thrown down to do him honour: the Seignory and the rest of the magistracy met him; and in this manner the triumphant and the submissive proceeded together to offer up public prayers at the Duomo. These done, he was conducted to the palace of the Medici, where alighting, he was for eight days sumptuously entertained. The monarch thus entreated, and misconceiving the people he was among, naturally misunderstood his position. They welcomed him as a guest, he deported himself as a conqueror. The pusillanimity of Pietro, no less than his own conceit, induced him to this. Accordingly he began to propose terms—oppressive and insulting—and, among others, the restoration of the Medici—the grant of enormous sums of money, and, in short, the sovereignty of the city. The indignation of the Florentine deputies hereon could not be restrained—the arrogance of the French became aggravated almost to violence. One of the deputies named Capponi, grew especially angry, tearing up the paper which contained these ill-considered and mistaken demands—and exclaiming, 'Blow your trumpets, and we will sound our bells!' The king was enraged, and vowed to give up the city to massacre.

Where now is Savonarola? With his friends and with his God. They and he have devoted themselves to prayer, that the calamities impending over Florence may be averted. Thus having received assurance of Divine interposition, they then proceed to action. Savonarola presently undertook to soothe the democratic spirits which had been violently excited, exerting himself in every way to calm and pacify the crowd. While he encouraged the better sort to the maintenance of order, he likewise required their charitable assistance for the sustenance of the

million. Famine and pestilence indeed were abroad. The Piagnoni shared in the merit of alleviating the general suffering. They were zealously indefatigable in procuring food for the starving, shelter for the sick, and graves for the dead. Savonarola urged his brethren to fulfil the same duties, both by example and precept, and was well seconded by the efforts of the monks. Some had fled from their posts for fear of the pestilence. To these Savonarola wrote a forcible appeal, awakening thereby their hearts and consciences to a sense of duty. At length, he demands an audience of Charles VIII. himself.

Unwilling to grant the required audience, Charles VIII. though he refused at first, yielded to a second application, and even rose to receive Savonarola with reverence, while entering his presence-chamber. And this reverence Savonarola receives with dignity, as the ambassador of the King of kings to an earthly monarch. Taking out a small brass figure of Christ crucified, which he always carried about him, Savonarola held it up before Charles VIII., and after a pause, said solemnly—'This is He who has made heaven and earth! Honour not me, but honour Him, who as King of kings, and Lord of lords, makes the universe tremble, and gives victory to princes, according to his will and justice, who punishes and overthrows wicked and unjust kings, and will ruin thee with all thy army, if thou desist not from thy cruelty, and set not aside the project thou hast conceived against this city. For there are in it many friends and servants of God, who night and day make supplication to the throne of God. Therefore this will happen unto thee, and they will scatter and confound thy troops. Knowest thou not that the Lord can conquer by many or by few? Dost thou not remember what He did to that haughty Sennacherib king of Assyria? Remember

that when Moses prayed, Joshua and the people conquered their enemies. Thus will He do to thee, who in thy presumption desirest what is not thine. Let it suffice thee to have the friendship of this people. Relinquish thy wicked and cruel scheme against the innocent and faithful.'

Much misunderstanding had existed touching the maintenance of the troops. At length some agreement was come to, but such was still the collision between the soldiers and the people, and such the lawless life of the former, that the departure of the French became exceedingly desirable. No one had had the courage to tell the king of this, and thus it was left for Savonarola to remonstrate with the conqueror on the uselessness of his remaining any longer in Florence, reminding him how, under the happiest auspices, he had entered the city, and how he was appointed to far greater undertakings, which if he did not prosecute, God would elect another and more fitting agent.

'The people,' said Savonarola, 'wonder much at your protracted stay among them—and cannot without peril continue longer in their present condition. Moreover, if your majesty persist in spending your time here in an unprofitable manner, you must permit to your adviser a sharper style of reproof than may be well pleasing to thee; but in no other can he give thee counsel that is good. God has called thee to a great work—to the renewing of the Church of Italy, as the servant of God has already declared to your sacred majesty, and four years before your majesty's arrival in Italy had continually and publicly prophesied. But by such means perhaps your majesty thinks it is unworthy of God to accomplish such a work. Be it so! God will then not be wanting in another instrument to bring it to a happy consummation!'

Nor was Savonarola's counsel impolitic, nor uncorroborated. D'Aubigny, the general captain of the army, arrived, at this very time, at Florence, from Romagna, with a proposition to the king, similar to that of Savonarola, complaining that the king let so many days, and such fine opportunities pass, that he thereby put weapons into his enemies' hands. Two days afterwards, on November 28, Charles VIII. with his warlike array, left Florence for Naples.

Several of the events recorded in this chapter are narrated by the celebrated Philippe de Comines, who was actively engaged in some of them. The historian had been sent into Italy previously to the invasion of it by Charles VIII., to ascertain the state of affairs. He then became acquainted with Savonarola, of whom he expresses the warmest admiration, not hesitating to describe him as a true prophet, and extolling his discernment as a statesman.

CHAPTER VI.

SAVONAROLA'S INFLUENCE.

Reform of the monasteries—New monastic society—Savonarola's pastoral habits—The devotees of his eloquence—Valori and Alberti—Legends regarding Savonarola—Specimens of his maturer poetry—Practical and devotional works—Epistolary correspondence—He collects the people to consult on the form of government.

THE character of Savonarola rises with his position. He is now to Florence what Numa was to Rome, Lycurgus to Sparta, Solon to Athens, and Moses to the children of Israel. Charles VIII. has left Florence, and Savonarola is now the greatest man in it, the spiritual and temporal ruler in one person—nothing less than the very Pope of Florence.

This is no exaggerated description, but the simple fact, and we must therefore be prepared for the relations it implies making peculiar demands on our attention and regard.

The reformation which Savonarola had designed, was such as a spirit full of faith, and a heart full of love towards God and man, might determine in ecstatic vision. Nothing less than the kingdom of God upon earth would be the aim of Savonarola to

establish. He began at the highest point—at that where the political and the spiritual are one: he proposed the projection of a theocracy—not that pseudo one which had raised the Carnal Will into supremacy at Rome, but that real and true theocracy by which the heavenly Jerusalem shall be governed, when sun and moon shall be no longer needed, but God himself shall be the light, and the Lamb himself the temple, by which the soul shall be illuminated, and in which it shall worship.

Already, long ago, he had initiated, both in speculation and practice, the reform of the monasteries. Savonarola was a monk, but a true monk—a monk in the highest sense of the word—that is, a spirit who had set himself apart till his last breath from the world, the flesh, and the devil, and had consecrated every function of his soul to the holiest uses, and the highest aims. Having no sensual gratifications to detain him, he was restless in the performance of the spiritual task to which he was devoted, and would not permit the world to slumber in ignorance that day was upon the hill tops. His voice was as a trumpet, that ever announced the earliest dawnstreak, and summoned men to a recognition of the returning glory.

The corruption of the monasteries first attracted his indignant notice. It was the thing that lay nearest to him. He was in them a monk in spirit and in truth, and found them occupied by monks only in name and profession. This, said he, ought not to be, and it shall not be—and forthwith he set about the removal of the evil. He began with his own cloister, with an endeavour to cleanse it from all secularity, and to restore it to the standard simplicity of the ancient institution. It was his purpose to quit San Marco, as too beautiful and costly for the severer rules that he desired to enforce—and to erect another

cloister at Carregi, near the villa of the Medici, of a sterner character, where the regulations of the Dominican order might be strictly observed, and especially the vow of poverty. He had indeed proceeded so far as to collect considerable contributions, and it is said, that all necessary means were prepared, when the plan was frustrated by the misapprehension of the novices and younger members of San Marco, who seemed to have feared that such a change in their habits might seriously affect their health. Such objections as these, however, were suggested from without; and, in fact, Savonarola was impeded in all his endeavours to procure for San Marco an alliance with the Lombard congregation of the Dominican order, inasmuch as the superiors had long abandoned their old rule, and were hostile to its restoration. He depended therefore on occasion, and was content to hide his time, looking forward to a juncture, when the different cloisters should be so reduced in the number of their members, that they would be anxious to seek the union which they now rejected.

To promote this design, Savonarola took not only every expedient step in Florence, but dispatched two brethren of his cloister to Rome, to solicit the papal permission and confirmation of his plan. No sooner was this application known, than it was opposed not only by the superiors of the Lombard congregation, but by almost all the political power of Italy. Nevertheless, Savonarola succeeded. Alexander VI. had reasons for favourably considering it; and on May 22, 1493, the papal brief was granted, wherein not only the separation from the general government of the Dominicans, which Savonarola desired, was conceded, but permission to receive into a new community all who were excluded from other cloisters.

Thus encouraged, a new society was founded. It consisted at first of about twenty or twenty-five

juvenile brethren, but was soon increased in number, including several Tuscan cloisters of the same order; the old rule of which, in its primitive severity, was observed in the new institution. The possessions of the cloisters also were restored or sold, that the brethren might serve God in real simple poverty. Many other regulations and ordinances in the same spirit, and to the same purpose, were added. The actual brethren of the order were required to devote themselves exclusively to the study of theology and to preaching, and moreover direct attention, according to the various talents of individuals, some to the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Moresco, and Chaldaic tongues, others to philosophy and jurisprudence; while the lay-brethren might select some art or handicraft for the profitable occupation of their time. Hence was every individual in the condition to support himself and a second brother of the order, who should accompany him on his spiritual missions, that they might not become burthensome to others. Notwithstanding the great austerity required in the new community, the number of the members, among whom were many even of the first families, so much increased, that the accommodation of the cloister had to be enlarged. San Marco was the chief place of assembly and authority, and Savonarola, even so early as the year 1494, was nominated the vicar-general of the same; the next in importance was at Fiesole.

Savonarola's cares were now divided between his flocks abroad and at home. He was unremitting in his endeavours to promote the welfare of those about him. His greatest joy was to be associated with them in some religious employment. Both while in Lombardy and at San Marco, he would go frequently with a party of monks and novices to some sequestered spot, where, after having recited a sacred service, they passed the time till dinner, in conversing

about God; after which, they assembled round Savonarola, while he explained a portion of Scripture. Sometimes they walked on a little, then rested under a shady tree, while he proposed sublime truths for discussion, or questioned the novices upon their meaning. At other times, they sang psalms, making a circle and performing, like the Israelites of old, religious dances, while they chanted. Occasionally, too, they would narrate certain examples of the saints, from which Savonarola deduced the applicable lessons.

A beautiful, almost ideal life, seems this which we are now detailing, and such as in actual existence was calculated to fascinate the young and imaginative. Teachers and labourers in the vineyard of life, Savonarola and his disciples were united in the bands of evangelic and fraternal affection. Some of them were missionaries, to carry the words of truth beyond Florence; and Savonarola himself, by his letters and spiritual epistles, made many friends at a distance to the cause of God. But in Florence lived and beat the heart, whose powerful pulses were felt in other parts of Italy, even in Rome itself.

The city of Florence had by these and other means become endeared to Savonarola as the beloved scene of his ministrations; why should he not, therefore, make this city of his affections the city of his God? He had won the hearts, and was zealous for the salvation of the souls of all within it. Of the cities of Italy, in Florence only had the Scriptures been unsealed—to her only had the approaching troubles been announced. The Spirit of God had been felt there in many souls—the Bread of Life had there been abundantly distributed. Through his influence, whatever was corrupt in the writers of Greece and Rome had been banished from many schools, and the various branches of literature, then comprehended.

under the term grammar, taught from the books of the fathers. So habitual and general was it for the Florentines to hear him, that shops were shut till after the morning preaching, and the richer citizens often entertained twenty or thirty at a time, of those who came from a distance. Even in the winter, the Church of San Marco was beset soon after midnight by devotees, who waited until it was opened, then lighting their tapers, remained in silent prayer until the mighty preacher appeared. Men who had found his eloquence the effectual means of changing their own minds, anxiously sought to bring others within his influence. An amusing instance of this is thus related.

The celebrated Valori, whose name has already been introduced to the reader, and who was afterwards the intimate friend of that true monk whose story we are relating, persuaded with much difficulty one Alberti, to accompany him on a visit to the prior of San Marco. The door-keeper who carried their message to his cell, said, 'Father, there are two men who wish to speak with you; one is your constant hearer, the other is much opposed; I pray your reverence do all you can to convert him, for he is my relation.' To which Savonarola replied, 'It is the work of God, not ours; nevertheless, if they wish to speak with me, introduce them.' So the door-keeper conducted them to the cell, and Savonarola received them courteously, sat down with them, and turning to Valori, said cheerfully, 'What good work are you about, wherefore are you come?' Valori replied, 'Father, our work is good, we have come to your reverence to receive spiritual exhortation.' Upon which the servant of God began in a most pleasing way to talk of Divine things, and having spoken some time, Valori addressed Alberti, 'If you wish to say anything, now is your opportunity.' But he was silent. That he might not be embarrassed,

Savonarola immediately took up again the thread of his discourse upon heavenly things. Shortly after Valori fearing to intrude longer on him, again asked his companion if he had anything to say; Alberti was as if dumb, and answered not a word, at which Valori, half-ashamed, took leave of Savonarola, and received his blessing.—Having left the convent, Valori began, 'God forgive thee Pietro, what hast thou done to me to-day? thou hast half-bewildered me; what is become of thy great boldness by which thou wert to have done such wonders? hast thou lost thy speech?' Alberti answered with shame, 'Francesco, forgive me. I was confused, I know not how; as soon as the father began to speak, my fear and agitation were such that my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth, and my lips were so closed that I could not have uttered a syllable; in truth, I confess that the voice and words of that father have almost distracted me.' This interview made a lasting beneficial impression on Alberti, but its full effect did not appear till after the death of Savonarola, when Alberti became a zealous Christian.

All sorts of visions are related by others, as having appeared to Savonarola and to themselves concerning him, many absurd enough to carry their own confutation; but it is worth while to cite one or two, as illustrating the spirit of the times. From Ambrose to Luther, including both of them, supernatural visitations and demoniacal agency have been represented as visibly taking place with regard to men, whose undisputed holiness of life exonerates them from all wilful participation in any fraud. Savonarola in one of his letters to the pope, of which hereafter we shall have occasion to speak at large, protested that he never pretended to have spoken face to face with the Almighty. 'It is said that I speak with God; I have never affirmed this, or any

thing like it, as all Florence can testify; but if I had, I should have incurred no penalty: it is not written in the canon or civil law, or in any book of authority, that if one says he speaks with God, he should be punished; foolish indeed, and impious would be such a decree, for who can impose laws on God? He can speak with whom He will, and command them to tell it, as the prophets did, 'Thus saith the Lord.'

Pico di Mirandola, a man universally admitted to have lived most piously, relates marvels of his friend Savonarola, such as abound in the legends which figurate the history of the Church of Rome; and they carry internal evidence of having arisen partly from the heated imagination and metaphorical expressions of their object, partly from the exaggerations or fabrications of injudicious friends. For instance; the devils being greatly annoyed at some measures, attempted by the prior for the reformation of his convent, began to molest and terrify all of his party; but finding their victims more assisted by the prayers of the good father than injured by their attacks, they directed all their malice towards him. When he went his wonted rounds to visit the inmates of each cell, and strengthen them by mutual prayer, psalm singing, and sprinkling of holy water, evil spirits congregated around him, so as to darken the air and impede his progress, audibly threatening him in these words, 'What loads of misery dost thou bring on thyself! we will excite against thee so many great and dreadful things, that thou wilt not be able to sustain thyself against them.' To which he cheerfully replied, 'they might do what they would, he feared none of them, for his help was in the Lord, who made heaven and earth.' The devils, however, seem to have been somewhat afraid of him, for when disturbed by his presence, they could not bring themselves to

pronounce his name accurately, but either shortened or transposed it, or vented their spite by muttering nick-names. Some of his disciples fancied they saw the Virgin blessing him, his brows encircled by the crown of martyrdom, and blood flowing from his side. One of them affirms, that more than once, a Dove, the symbol of the Holy Ghost, its wings sparkling with gold and silver, was seen to alight, and rest on his shoulder, whispering gently with its beak in his ear.

Savonarola's descriptions of his visions and revelations are exceedingly vague, and are mostly due to a poetic imagination, highly spiritualized and coloured by its devotion to religious topics. Notwithstanding the business of life had now come upon him so urgently, he still continued indeed the practice of poetical composition. The following is a favourable specimen of his maturer pieces :—

Hymn.—OF THE LOVE OF JESUS.

Now, when in pity to my weary days,
My gentle guardian his sweet harp displays,
Me from the billows to heaven's gate he brings ;
From the resounding, yea, the burning strings
Fall strains of wisdom on my softened heart,
Which bid the welcome tear full oft to start.
Alas ! such tears mine eyelids may not steep,
As fall from those whom love has taught to weep.
Never did swift and thirsty stag so bound,
To reach the spring, as my heart at that sound.
That hard heart from which blunted fell the sword,
But a sharp arrow left the glittering chord,
Which the obdurate adamant must pierce.
Thou fount of living waters ! who the fierce
And angry Nero might'st to mercy move,
Oh, never can a heart so evil prove,
As not to yield to thy prevailing dart,
Thy still small voice, the peace thy words impart.
My soul, what dost thou ? while each several tone
Within my breast wakes echo of its own—

Cheering my pathway, ever urging on,
Recalling yet the time already gone.
Oh! how accordant to my heart's desire
The harmony those soothing words inspire,
'He raised from earth her pallid flowers,
To wreathe them in his heavenly bowers.'
Oh! happy sin! say, what hast thou to plead
That such a Saviour is thy happy meed?
Come, all ye weary with the soul's unrest,
Come from the Indian shores and farthest West;
Needs not the warrior's or the monarch's fame,
The fine gold of this endless store to claim.
Ye who have nothing, to this treasure haste,
And lift your heads celestial streams to taste.
My refuge certain, now I know no fear,
My glad heart glows, my fetters disappear.
Gazing on yonder sign, yon cruel mark,
Alas! insensate world, that from thy dark
And mournful valley could'st such love efface,
Nor of his bitter groans retain one trace.
Oh! had he granted but the lowest seat,
Contented, I had crouched beneath his feet.
Were my unworthy name the last enrolled,
'Mong all the dreadful book shall once unfold—
My soul too firm and vigorous to complain,
Had calmly borne the burthen and the chain.
But now, mine eyes with grateful tears o'erflow,
To thee, blest Jesus! every thing I owe.
Since from my mother's breast I went astray,
And from the cradle shunn'd thy holy way:
Now didst thou not attune the broken lyre,
No harmonies my dull heart could inspire.
The lawless current in its rapid course,
Had swept o'er all with desolating force,
Till eager wishes and rash frenzy sank,
Exhausted, leaving but a dreary blank.
By thee my heart sings to my gracious Lord;
Let me, I pray thee, often hear thy word.
In still communion animate my breast,
Guide me, O Lord! wherever is impressed
The peaceful image of thy kingdom's rest.

The same strain, approaching to mysticism, prevails in all his practical and devotional works. Of himself Savonarola always speaks most humbly, often begging

the prayers of his brethren, that he may be kept from sin, while he urges them to aim at the greatest heights of spirituality, thus realizing the union of the humanity with the Godhead, which he avers 'has been the most efficacious remedy to restore happiness to man, and which, as it consists in the vision of the Divine essence, might have appeared impossible from the Divine sublimity and the meanness of our intellect, had not God been pleased to unite the human nature to the Divine in one person, which is more wonderful than the union of the souls of the blessed to the Divine soul in that person, so that men have hope of being able to arrive at that glory: hence we see, that since this incarnation men begin to arise again, and aspire to the former blessedness.'

From a Treatise on the Love of Christ.

'When the kind and loving Jesus influences a soul which really loves and seeks Him, He opens the intellect to so much light, and warms the affections, and excites so much delight in his benignity and presence, that He raises it above itself, and softens it to such emotion, that the abundant sweetness descends from the superior part to the body, which melts into tears. And He awakens so great a longing for eternal things, that it sojourns on earth as if separated from the body, and absorbed in spirit. It is true, this is the privilege of few. This we see every day in religion, that when any one begins to enjoy the Holy Spirit, he is glad to be alone, and immediately separates himself from other comforts and corporeal recreations, which would not be, if he did not feel within his heart greater consolations than those he refuses. But what is this spiritual comfort—repose of mind, peace, sweetness, gentleness, joy, exultation, triumph, love, ardent desire, celestial intoxication, almost eternal felicity, or whatever else it may be

called? I do not think it can be explained or understood, but by experience; let it suffice at present that we have proved this consolation which proceeds from the love of Jesus, whatever it is, to be beyond comparison greater than all worldly pleasures.'

'When the soul feels warmed by this tender love, enjoying a spark of heavenly things, it should be ever watchful over itself, that as far as is permitted by its frailty, it may not offend the eyes of the merciful Jesus who has given it such a treasure, reflecting how great would be the ingratitude of separating from Him by its own negligence, and being so much the more careful in proportion as it has tasted his sweetness, and experienced its own infirmity.' Heb. iv. 4—6.

'Soul, what dost thou? heart, what thinkest thou? tongue, why hast thou become mute? Where are my elevated conceptions, where my delightful contemplations, where my words? I am lost, I have wandered, I have totally failed: I would declare, and have not strength; I would speak, and have no voice; I would express my ideas, but my mind obeys me not. Oh! ungrateful heart! Oh! disobedient mind! why dost thou not fulfil my wish? Open thine eyes, and look what a sad image is this day placed before thee. What heart is not afraid, what mind is not confounded, what cruel man becomes not pitiful, what eye can refrain from tears? Oh pity! Oh charity! Oh infinite love! I have grievously sinned, and thou Jesus wert stricken. I have been thine enemy, and thou Jesus for love of me wert nailed to the cross.'

One of the Spiritual Epistles.

'Brethren, beloved in Christ, grace be with you,

and peace from God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Although I have not saluted you by letter for a long while, this does not arise from my having forgotten you, for I continually remember you in my prayers; but it arises from the tumult of these times, in which we have so many occupations, that we cannot stop to write consolatory letters, nevertheless your entreaties and desire have induced me to steal a little time. My brethren, as in natural things, whatever moves sets out from that which is fixed, and all animals who would go forward, at every step plant the foot; so in spiritual life we must fix our hearts on the love of Jesus Christ before everything, if we would proceed regularly in good works. We must believe that the source of a good life is the love of God and the love of our neighbour, and believing this, seek to obtain and exercise it. And because the righteous man through the help of God may exercise it in every place and at all times; although sometimes he might more willingly remain in one place than in another, nevertheless, when he understands it to be the will of God, that he should remain where he is placed in order to obey, he does not murmur, but lives cheerfully, knowing that in all places there is Jesus Christ his God, whom he may serve and please, and in whom he may delight wherever he finds himself. We must not only believe, but frequently reflect that the goodness of God and his providence extends to all things, even the least; and that everything which is done upon earth, except sin, is done by God. Since the life of man is a warfare upon earth, we must think Christ is like a captain, who orders his soldiers to different posts. To be good soldiers, and do what belongs to our part, so that the conflict may be carried on in an orderly manner, we must be obedient to the captain, and fight wherever he places us, especially when our chief is one who cannot err. If

the soldiers do not comply with the regulations of their leader, choosing to do everything after their own fashion, they endanger their own persons as well as the whole army. We ought then always in the spiritual life to think of exercising charity in such manner, and in such place as God wills, who orders everything well, and has made various conditions among men, ordained different merits and different crowns. Yet many deceive themselves in this conflict, who fancy that a good life consists in perpetual prayer, or abstinence, or study of the Scriptures, or other similar good works, and being intent upon one of these only, not exerting themselves in every place and every time, such persons must have particular respect to certain times and places, so when they are hindered in these exercises they fall into impatience and vexation of mind. They are not content in the places appointed for them by God, they wish to rule their captain, not to be ruled by him. And so they perplex themselves, and often also their companions; whereas, if they thought that a good life is exercising charity in whatever manner and time God wills, and believed that all which is done, said, or commanded to them, comes from God, intending to serve Him with their whole heart, they would not care about places or persons, or any particular acts, but would simply exercise charity according as it was ordained by God through his instruments, to which they are subjected, and they would live cheerfully, remembering the shortness of the present life and the eternity of the future. Oh my brethren! we have to thank God greatly who permits that, while we remain in this life, we gain a reward by exercising charity in every time, in every place, and in every condition. Therefore let not him who is sick grieve, because our leader Christ has placed him there to war and to exercise charity with patience. If thou

who art diseased wouldest say, I wish to be well, that I may do much good, and not trouble others: foolish! God has assigned thee this post to carry on the spiritual conflict, why wilt thou be wiser than He who put thee there to purify thee, and crown thy patience? Attend to thy recovery by the art of medicine, that thou mayest not tempt God, and be content with what He may do with thee. For in this case thou dost not trouble others, but thou art an occasion of merit to them, for they also ought to think that they are placed there, and in that army, by the Captain who cannot err, that by exercising charity they may deserve eternal life. St. John Chrysostom well says, 'no one is hurt except by himself,' because charity, which is our only treasure, as we have said, is not lost without sin, and sin is not sinful if it is not voluntary, and therefore none can be really hurt but by his own will; no one then can complain of any but himself. I have made this discourse, beloved, that you may reflect that the kingdom of heaven is everywhere, and we need not go more to one city than another to obtain it, as those do who wish to acquire sciences, who go where learning is common. It may happen that greater comfort in doctrine or in exterior worship is found in one situation than in another; nevertheless, whoever has given his whole heart to God is comforted by Him, even in deserts and in solitude, as we read of innumerable holy fathers; for the good Christian carries his consolation everywhere, and may say with that philosopher, 'all that is mine I carry with me.'

'Would you see how one place or state is not more advantageous than another to the careless man? Judas the disciple of Christ was wicked, the school of Christ availed him not. Nicolai, one of the seven deacons, fell in the Primitive Apostolic Church, and numberless others perished in the houses of the

saints. Similarly, in the Old Testament, it profited not Ishmael to be the son of Abraham, nor Esau to be the son of Isaac, nor many others to be of the race or school of the patriarchs, or of the prophets. We must not then place our affections on situation or circumstances, but believe that a good life, as aforesaid, is to exercise charity in every place and every way which our Saviour wills. And this also I add for some who, when they have a great temptation, are disquieted, and say I would rather have any temptation than this, not understanding that no one can overcome temptation without the grace of God, and the grace of God is mighty to enable them to overcome every temptation. These like to fight in their own way, and against such enemies as they choose: they should reflect there is no temptation over which holy men have not triumphed, and under which the negligent have not fallen into sin. Therefore, perhaps, thou wouldest have been vanquished by the very temptation for which thou wouldest exchange the one which so vexes thee. Many have been victorious in great temptations, and ruined by little ones. Pray to God for us, and we likewise will pray for you to fulfil the commandment of the Apostle St. James. James iii. 16.'

The letters of Savonarola are in a quieter strain than his sermons. He writes thus to his young disciples. 'Above all things love God—with all your heart; seek his honour more than the salvation of your own souls; strive diligently to purify your mind by frequent confession; raise your affections above earthly things; communicate frequently and devoutly; never consider yourself better than any one, however sinful, but rather worse; do not think ill of any one, but always well; be often silent; do not delight in company or feasts, be as much alone as your station will permit. Let murmuring, de-

tracting, slanderous, deceitful, idle words be far from your ears, and still further from your tongue; pray often, meditate every hour, endeavour to unite the whole family in true peace, show no haughtiness in word or action. You must not be too familiar with those beneath you, but rather adopt a courteous gravity with them; ever pray for perseverance, being always fearful, and having God always before your eyes; renew your good resolutions every day, and confirm yourself in well-doing; despair not for any sin. Pray to God for me constantly, that He may make me do what I teach.'

Advice for Profitable Reading.

'You should reflect that the holy Gospel, which contains all the perfection of spiritual life, was not written on tables of stone, or of any other material; nor in books or papers; but in human hearts by the finger and power of the Holy Spirit—therefore the Apostle Paul says to the Corinthians, 'Ye are our epistle—not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone, but in the fleshly (that is soft, and flexible) tables of your heart. The books of Christ, then, were the Apostles and other saints, written with the finger of the Holy Spirit. But because our Saviour knew that men would lose the Spirit by their sins, and that their wickedness would increase, in order that the holy doctrine written in the hearts of the Apostles should not fail, might be extended to the absent, and preserved for those who should come after, and that bad men might not corrupt it, He willed that the Gospel should be also written in books. It is necessary for him who would profit by spiritual reading, and penetrate the sacred Scriptures, above all things to cleanse the heart well, not only from every mortal sin, but also from all self-love, and to read not only that he may teach,

but in the first place to learn for himself how to live well. And whenever he begins to read, he should first pray that God would enlighten him in the way of truth, and then read diligently, not carelessly, but considering and remembering the sentences, and referring ever to his own conscience, as a woman adorning herself, who goes not to the mirror to see the things around it, or to see all which the mirror shows, but to see her face, and her head, if there should be anything unsuitable. Thus should the soul go to the perusal of the Holy Scriptures to see the face of conscience and the head of reason, and to observe whether in reason or conscience there is anything wrong, or any spot; to purify itself that it may be lovely in the eyes of the eternal Bridegroom.'

He continues on the same subject.

'One of the saints asked a monk to teach him a psalm. He began with that, 'I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue.' Having learnt the first verse, he asked to have it explained, and having heard the explanation, said he would not learn any more till he had done what this first verse commanded, and would afterwards learn the rest. He did not return for several years, and the monk meeting him, asked why he did not learn the rest of the psalm; he replied, he had not yet done what was contained in the first verse.'

Such then had been the teaching of Savonarola—such the example. What influence naturally belongs to such virtue and talent as they display, was now to be exhibited by him practically, and in the most important relations. Both the tranquillity and the liberty of the Republic had to be restored and established. True, it had been freed from the tyranny of a family, which had held the inhabitants so long in subjection—but it was necessary now to sup-

ply its absence, by increasing the executive powers of the State. Soon after the retreat of Charles VIII. Savonarola collected the people (with the exception of the women) in the Duomo, and in the presence of the Signory, the magistrates, and others in authority, there assembled in a provisional parliament, spake solemnly and impressively concerning their political interests, and the means of securing order and justice. He declared then and there his preference for the Popular Form of Government, and his conviction that the most respectable citizens of Florence were mainly in its favour, insisting, however, as the condition of its durability, on the necessity to all men of godly fear, a Christian walk, and that patriotism which subordinates private interests to the general good, and the general peace of the citizens among one another.

CHAPTER VII.

SAVONAROLA A LEGISLATOR.

Theocracy — Democracy — Aristocracy—Soderini—Vespucci —Savonarola's political views—Fra Domenico da Ponzo.— Ecclesiastical Reform — Education. — Democratic movements—Committee of eighty.

THERE was ever a bias in the mind of Savonarola to the spiritual aspects of whatever subject he discussed. As all along in the ecclesiastical reforms, so now in the political regeneration, the same poetic tendency led him almost exclusively to the one side. It has accordingly been objected to the results of the revolution in Florence, that they are resolvable into a mere political experiment. They came at first to an agreement to choose twenty Accopiatori, to whom they entrusted the choice of official persons, but were soon compelled to consent to a more democratic course, subject to yet further changes. Thus the organic arrangement of the constitution was deferred, and the bare principles only were announced. Some have even said that upon the former almost everything depended, and that in declaring the latter so contentedly, the peculiar mobility of the people was not taken into account. Savonarola,

it appears, imagined that he saw in the popular constitution proposed the best possible defence against tyranny, and that, if it could be organized, it would offer peculiar facilities for spreading the spiritual seed in the hearts of the people. Many, however, were, not without cause, of opinion that the prophetic father in his plans of State-Reform had more in his mind the abstractions of a Christian philosophy, than the activities of a worldly life. As we have said, it was a Theocracy which he had contemplated—which, in the idea, every democracy must in fact be, that at all promises stability.

Savonarola's whole conduct, and his repeated declarations, leave us in no doubt on the subject. First of all, he had already before this, immediately after the expulsion of the Medici, thrown out in his sermons several hints on the new organization of the State as he pictured it to himself; in November, 1494, he was permitted to preach a sermon before the Signory, the other persons of the magistracy, and the people, but with the exclusion of women and children. After he had stated separately, in an introductory exposition, the opinions of philosophers and theologians on the best constitution of a State, and decided which, according to his view, was the naturally suitable constitution for Florence, he developed in the following exposition the ground-work of this constitution. At the head of all he placed the fear of God, and the Christian life and action thence arising, with the improvement of manners. The second principle was, that each should prefer the public welfare to private advantage. The third, a general *amnesty*, namely for the friends and adherents of the previous form of government, with the single reservation that the debtors of the State should be bound to the restitution demanded from them; but yet that the collection of such public moneys should

be made with all gentleness and discretion, and moreover that no legal procedure should be adopted against the debtors. Fourthly, a *universal form of government* (forma di governo universale) should be introduced, so that all citizens who were competent according to the old laws of the State (therefore not the dregs of the people) should have a share in it. This general council should choose the magistrates in the city and the Florentine territory, and confirm the laws and regulations which were before deliberated on and received in the more select committee of the government. Savonarola was so convinced of the universal suitableness of this constitution, that he engaged that God himself would turn the hearts of its opponents. After many deliberations and debates, it came into life as far as its principal features were concerned, and the *general council* was constituted. The chief opposition was directed against the amnesty, a measure which not only showed the humane disposition of the man in the clearest light, but which was moreover one of the most important means of success. But undeniably the religious character which he laboured to impress on the whole, was still more hateful to his personal adversaries than the (considerably modified) sovereignty of the people.

Common minds could more readily apprehend the aims and interests of the two parties, the liberal and the legitimates, who fought in the arena on which he looked down with the impartial eye of a superior power. Pagol' Antonio Soderini, the representative of the former opinion, unfolded the principles of his party in the following manner. The love of freedom, he contended, was as it were innate in the people of Florence; and the relation of the citizens to one another based on an equality which is a necessary presupposition in democracies. Such a government accordingly was in his estimation unquestionably

fitter for that people than any other. Experience has justified the opinion of Soderini, inasmuch as this form of power has really existed in Florence, ever since the State began to rule in the name of the people. The constitution, whose introduction had been attempted, not without special regard to the older one of Florence, was according to the view of this party more in name than in reality a democracy, they wished therefore a more perfect form, by which the interests of the people would be better guarded, but at the same time a well-ordered and regulated one. The two following might be regarded as the principles of such a democracy. First, that a general Council should be instituted, consisting of all those who according to the Florentine laws are competent to take part in the government; by whom all laws should be deliberated on beforehand, all offices of State be filled by a majority of voices, that no one might be excluded by passion or foreign arbitrary will from that for which his talent and his civil activity fitted him. Hence every one who would attain a place of honour must labour to make himself worthy of it by real services to the State. But, the second, and equally necessary principle was, that all affairs of the administration, the examination of the laws, the consulting on war and peace, &c., should be managed by officials specially appointed for the purpose. There would consequently be formed from out of the general council a more select Committee (consiglio scelto) of men of experience and capability, in each department of the administration. Nothing of that sort could be generally required from the mass of the people, nor could the most important matters otherwise be dispatched with the needful energy and celerity. But with these two ground-pillars the freedom of the State was to be secured. There might indeed yet remain behind much that related to

the developement and perfecting of single particulars, but this also would be effected in time by the organic strength of that constitution; and it would be in the highest degree unwise, in a moment when the citizens, scarcely escaped from tyranny, were naturally full of distrust, to wish to take up all, since they could not be superintended at once. Besides, they had before them the living example of the Venetian constitution; for even this was in a certain sense a democracy, since even the *aristocratic* element of it was a purely *civil* one, and deserved to be imitated by Florence in many parts, the rather as peace, unity, prosperity, and power had undeniably shown themselves there as the noble fruits of such a constitution. A retrospect of the former revolutions of the Florentine State would give the same result; for from time immemorial had it wavered between popular licentiousness and individual usurpation, whence arose constant discord, discontent, bloody scenes, and lastly tyranny. A government which should lean to aristocracy in Florence would always of necessity be a government of several tyrants. Unquestionably then that of an individual would be much better, which neither possesses the combined strength nor the common will to injure that belongs to an oligarchy. But now the moment was just come, when the Florentine people might decide; nay, it were inexcusable to let slip such an opportunity as perhaps would not recur for centuries; or, instead of choosing the better lot, to give the State again a prey to fluctuating agitation.

The second opinion was represented by Guid' Antonio Vespucci, a famous lawyer, a man of as great talents as undeniable activity. He declared himself in the following manner. History and experience witness alike against the sanguine hopes which men indulge from a democracy; never is a ripe and true judgment to be expected from the collective mass

of the people, much rather are the highest concerns every way endangered in their hands. Where men *count* votes instead of *weighing* them, it remains always at the disposal of chance whether anything good results. But in any case true grounds of preference are scarcely perceived, much less valued, by the multitude; on the contrary, the greatest influence is given to passion and private interest. The people under such a constitution will by no means content themselves with the honourable fruits of freedom, but each seeks to supplant the other, especially in Florence, where it had never been the custom to yield to the one who had better discernment and greater merit. It is natural for men to go from one extreme to another, and truly democracy is just such an extreme, which soon grows to the worst tyranny of all, because they here know neither measure nor bounds. The constitution of Venice was already firmly rooted in the people by long age, and at all events a third element also there came into consideration, namely, the perpetual office of Doge, not to mention that the weightiest matters there were entrusted rather to the power of a few individuals than to that of many. But the State of Florence had a past history likewise, and did not grow up then for the first time from the earth; therefore, as it were foolish to think that the medicines which take effect with a clear body, would also show their strength with one that is filled with much morbid matter, even so is it an unfounded supposition and deceitful hope to believe, that in a State where there are accumulated materials for disorder within, its powers will help themselves by their fundamental organic symmetry. Much rather is it to be feared, that what from the beginning was set up in an imperfect elevation, will with time become a fearful occasion for new disorders. Rome and Athens show what a democracy can do:

short would the life of those Republics have been, had not constant wars occupied them; and as to the latter, let it be known that its fall and its servitude had their foundation in its democracy. Besides, in that constitution which had been already approved of in the general assembly of the people, no arbitrariness was possible, since the persons who constitute the government would be chosen not by few but by many, and moreover by lot. The weakness itself of the present Italian body politic, one would think, must make it desirable to entrust the management of the highest concerns to experienced physicians, and not to new practitioners.

Undoubtedly, according to the position of things at the time, not Soderini's, but Vespucci's opinion would have gained the upper hand, had not Savonarola, who had already often defended the interests of his country, and certainly from pure love of the people, enlisted himself with his whole authority and popular influence on the former side. If a delusion prevailed here, it was the same that blinded Soderini, namely, that a well-organized democracy seemed just the fit government for Florence. Savonarola, who moreover did not mistake the meaning of *monarchy*, often makes this avowal in his sermons, and his knowledge of the character of the people, as well as of all the conditions of things in Florence, entitles it to consideration.

Some of the Medici, though the foremost chiefs had been banished, yet remained as a party; and, though not seeking vulgar popularity, yet spared no pains that might raise them to the abandoned seat of power. The next party had likewise a dependance on the first, who, though their prospects were not cheering, was not much diminished in numbers, nor without hopes, and plans of operation. But the more influential party at present was composed of the older

respectable families and the people, including the Signory. Francesco Valori and Pagol' Antonio Soderini were the political heads of this party, Savonarola its informing soul. For its prosperity, it was indebted to his continuous admonitions and mediatorial endeavours, by which also the last catastrophe since the banishment of the Medici was carried off without bloodshedding or other misfortune. Nothing served more to strengthen Savonarola's influence than the manner in which he had conducted the business with the French invader. The popular government he sought to establish now became the subject of his discourses, in which he still continued to insist on the duties which he required as the conditions of enduring order and liberty. At length the Signory desired him to reduce his views to writing, and we are thus enabled to consider their principal points more at large and in detail.

'The need of help which men experience makes the social life necessary to them, because only by reciprocal assistance they form a perfect whole. In order, however, to enjoy in this community, including as it must many even base members, the necessary rest and security, laws are needed, to control the self-willed efforts of individuals. These, accordingly, first appoint a head, a superior of the community, who watches over the common weal; for without him the community could not subsist. This head of the community may be One who presides as ruler over the whole;—a Monarchy. But the community may also insist on its being Several —and may appoint the better sort and the more discerning thereto from amongst themselves; an Aristocracy (governo degli ottimati). Or the whole community may reserve to itself the highest authority, by supplying the public offices by election; a Democracy, (governo civile). Every one of these

three forms of government may be good in its way, in so far as it not only seeks to advance and secure the general advantage with all circumspection, but also strives to guide individuals unto virtue and religion. On the contrary, all dominion of mere force is reprobable, that regards individual gain at the cost of the general good, and postpones the moral demands to individual interests.

'In general, only those should govern who have shown a capacity for it. Therefore in the monarchy the citizens should not govern, but One who is in capacity superior to the citizens. But if such an individual is not to be found, it is just that the people or many of the discerning should govern. But if we ask which of the three forms of government attains most securely the object proposed, monarchy before all deserves the preference. Unity and peace to the people, as the first aim of government, will be more surely gained and kept by One who stands at the head, than by Several,—better by Few than Many. If all members of the community had only One to look up to and obey, they would run little risk of falling into parties, rather they would all unite in love and fear of the One. But if Several stand at the head, it is usual that one holds with these, another with those—whereby interest is divided, and the unity and strength of the people weakened. Besides, the principle of monarchy is established in the government of the world as in nature. The bees have *one* queen, the cranes follow *one* leader, the sheep *one* ram. In brief, the monad goes through all as ground and root.

'But, as even in nature, much that is in itself good and excellent, yet operates under certain circumstances disadvantageously; thus also, in the inquiry respecting the scope and aim of the form of government,

the nature and circumstances of the people must be regarded.

'History and experience show, that for restful-strong people like the Northerns, and for weak-sleepy people like the Orientals, monarchy is beneficial and appropriate. While an ingenious, easily moved, passionately enterprising people will not endure it; such as those of Italy in general at all times, and especially in Florence. Nor will the power of custom readily submit to compulsion. This consideration demands for the Florentine people a popular government, to which from antiquity the sense of the citizens is so much familiarized, that it has become a second nature. The introduction, accordingly, of another form of government, would be the cause of infinite disturbances and divisions, and the people in the end would be robbed of all freedom;—which again experience can best confirm.

'If then a popular government for the city of Florence is most appropriate, then the inquiry arises, how it should now be regulated, to establish it securely for the future against every attempt at a dominion of force. Not wealth, as we commonly believe, is the cause why an individual attains the headship of a State, nor will a just law militate against the hereditary right and enjoyment of great power. Rather the cause lies in this, that an individual attains to overwhelming influence and exclusive consideration in the State, by the possession and distribution of public offices and dignities. To deprive individuals of this power is the first stipulation of a popular government, which demands that no law and no tax—no office nor honour should be conferred or become valid, without the consent of the whole people. The constitution of Venice may serve as an example of this. But in order that the whole people

shall not be collected together on every occasion, this right will be vested by the people in a certain number of citizens, who shall be named the Great Council (consiglio grande), and wherein all will partake who, according to the old law of the State, are capable of being invested with public offices, For further confirmation and security of this college, we must by strong laws provide that all the citizens may regularly attend at the meetings of the assembly at the most convenient times; that all partiality, courting for votes and the like, shall be banished from the council, and all bad citizens as much as possible removed from it. But should a single person aim at being the general ruler, and tyrannize over the people, (the greatest misfortune that can happen to a people,) then on the part of the government there must be a proceeding against such person; for as it is permitted to no single person to kill a man, or to take the law into his own hands, so likewise is it not permitted to any single individual to expel or destroy a tyrant. But if such tyrant has violently taken to himself the dominion against the will, or with the forced consent only of the whole people, any one of the people may destroy him as an enemy. For the people has a just war against him, and in war any one may kill his enemy. Yet it is better to endure tyranny itself a little, if it be not too oppressive, aud there be not still worse to be dreaded.

'As in everything, so likewise in the State, spiritual force is the best and worthiest of ruling powers. Hence it is that even from the beginning a still imperfect state of government will flourish in complete security, and with time acquire perfection; if it is always universally acknowledged that the end of all Christian States is the improvement of the morals of the citizens by the withdrawing of all obscenity and all wickedness, and that the truly Christian life

subsists in the fear of God; if moreover the law of the gospel is esteemed as the measure and rule of civil life, and of all laws that are made; if, farther, all citizens show a true love of their country, which, as pure uncorrupted self-love subjects its own interests to the general good; if finally, a general peace shall have been concluded among the citizens, all past injustice of the former government forgiven, and all elder hatred forgotten;—such unity makes strong within, secure and feared without.'

Such are Savonarola's views of a State, as left on record by himself. The last clause contains a sufficient reply to those who complain that he simply announces principles, instead of prescribing a system. More should not be expected from a Savonarola; nothing other than such abstract propositions was it proper for him even to attempt. And this was enough; for wherever there is life it always expresses itself in an appropriate shape. No one knew this better than he, and somewhere he has expressed it. The necessity for his acting as he did, also, early became apparent. An attempt was soon made to cast discredit on him in his political capacity. Many charges were preferred against his honesty, and the truth of his predictions, which, though they gained little credit, were sufficient to warn him that he had enemies on the watch. One Fra Domenico da Ponzo even took occasion to preach against him, announcing from the pulpit, that since the primitive ages of the Church, no more prophets had appeared or could appear; that the declarations of Savonarola were untrue, and his denunciations of Divine vengeance not to be dreaded. To this attack Savonarola deigned no reply. To those however who accused him of undue clerical interference with secular matters, and an ambition to have a republic governed by a monk, he answered, that under such difficult circumstances he

had by all means held it for his duty, from the pressing demands in respect of the newly-ordered State, to give advice according to his best knowledge, especially at a time when no one had the courage to say the truth in the council, or was free enough from passion to create the necessary rest and peace for the State. But he had done no more. To give oneself to public affairs for the universal benefit, to lead men to justice and propriety — is not to be called meddling in worldly things. Besides, such a share in civil relations is neither unworthy in itself of a priest, nor without example from elder and modern times. Yet had he never gone further in this respect than to denounce open abuses — to encourage men to peace and what is good—above all, to preach the gospel without ever allowing himself any more decided influence on the particular government of the State. 'I have said to you,' he declares in one of his sermons, 'that I will not mix in government affairs, but only labour therein to preserve complete the general peace. To recommendations of individuals, or similar solicitations, I never yield—go with those to the right officials. I also say here openly, if any of my friends should be recommended to you, deal no otherwise with him than according to justice. But yet once more, I do not meddle with State affairs; I wish only that the people should remain in peace, and receive no injury.'

Savonarola was a Church reformer by choice, but a State reformer by necessity. The reform of his cloister, and an indirect share in the organization of the State, were the proper aim of his efforts, as preparatory to a universal renovation of the Church, that should bring back life and morals in an all-pervading regeneration to the original Christian simplicity, unity, and purity. We must at least endeavour to comprehend the fundamental principles which led him thereto. They were these.

Florence especially should become, in moderate political freedom, a truly Christian, a Divine State, where the law of God should serve as the basis and measure of all arrangements, and only in this sense did he urge so unremittingly a general peace and amnesty as the beginning of a civic life, worthy of Christians. 'Thou knowest,' he said, 'what grounds I have laid before thee, because thou shouldst be a spiritual City—I have shown to you also with clear grounds, that a kingdom is stronger the more spiritual it is, and is the more spiritual the closer it connects itself with God. But no one can have communion with God who does not make peace with his neighbour.' 'But as the Gospel should be the foundation of this universal reform, so the first Church gave on all sides the purest image. That Church which, united in will and endeavour, being one heart and one soul, attained the highest and most difficult things by unity and love. In this holy zeal the Church needed no earthly goods—ay, it never enjoyed lovelier peace than in its poverty. First, when the spiritual glow cools by degrees, came forward earthly needs, which (always more richly satisfied in the course of time) retrogressively undermined still more its original love and unity—so that in the later time the beauty of the Primitive Church is quite abandoned and destroyed. The next consequence from that was, that the pure simple worship of God was lost, and a crowd of external usages was made to supply the void of the internal life. Therefore such worship consists in the present day almost exclusively of outward ordinances for delighting the sense, without men troubling themselves about the inward worship of God, the purity of the heart. The Church of Christ has gone back to the old covenant, which was ever rich in exterior rites—but Christ came to take away from us this burthen, while He comprised all those precepts in the one Command-

ment of love, and instead of the earthly promises of the old covenant, only promised spiritual goods. But since then men have mixed up with the Gospel laws of Christ, much that is worse than the Jewish additions to the law of Moses.

'But if we ask whence it comes, that the Church has so much lost her original purity, the answer is, because the Holy Scripture, which demands and nourishes the Christian life, which men ought to have read and given as the true nourishment of the soul to the faithful, has fallen into oblivion. For logic, philosophy, and legal science, there are teachers appointed—all arts have their masters. But no one teaches the Holy Scripture, nor will any one learn it. Since this light was extinguished it has been night. Instead of preaching Christ, they offer for money from the pulpit a mixture of philosophy and Christianity, or one hears of nothing at all but of Aristotle and Plato (the Divine man), of Cicero, Demosthenes, and other heathens, whose words they cite without spirit or Christian feeling. Even Dante and other voluptuous poets, who diffuse idolatry and heathenism in all the world, appear in the sanctuary. We also live ourselves even as formerly the heathens did. Thus now the most sacred thing is degraded in the pulpit; theology to rhetoric, poetry, and fable. The holy is mixed with sin, the ecclesiastical with worldly vanity. They hold market in the churches; men and women come there in the greatest decoration, and surround the altar, so there is a crowding and a confession without devotion and fear of God. On festival days benches are placed for the pretty women, and the young men surround them like a wall. Then the women go to and fro, and hear a thousand improper speeches. Are these festivals to the honour of God? And at last to disturb even the still devotion of individuals, the devil has begun to bring into operation

music and the organ, which only please the ear and edify nothing. In the ancient unity there were many festivals, with songs, trumpets, a tabernacle and the like. That for the most part had an end with Christ. Now it appears, all this comes again to honour. It seems they think to adorn the church to the honour of God, and paint the Virgin Mary as a mistress. I also tell you, that nowhere in the Gospel is it commanded to have golden and silver crosses, and other costly things in the church. But the Gospel says, I have thirsted and thou hast not given me drink, &c. Therefore make a law that all these costly things might be sold. Look to it that those who gave them as gifts are contented therewith, that no bitterness may ensue—then will I be the first who lays hand on the cups and crosses of my cloister to feed the poor from this superfluity.

'But consider only the whole state of the Church; how few in this day do good, and walk in the path of God. Where are the holy Fathers, of whom there were so many before the altar in the Church? Wicked and godless men have taken their places, so that the Church of Christ perhaps never found itself worse bestead than now. But since God cannot let them perish in destruction, He must necessarily again renew them, as may be shown still more decidedly from the grounds of Scripture and reason. But He will renew them under war and trouble—partly to purify them themselves, partly to punish them according to his justice for their former wickedness, the cause of the coming distress and trouble. He who looks considerately, must confess that Italy is the acme of wickedness. But when the measure is full, the sword must clear away all that is wicked. Yes, thy turpitude, Italy, Rome, and Florence! thy godless life, thy unchastity, thy usuriousness, bring ruin. Therefore have I already, long ago, warned thee and

called continually—do penance Florence, lead a Christian life, and let it not repent thee to do good for the sake of God and thy soul. For he who does not repent and turn himself to God, is without inward and outward consolation. Repentance is the only means of safety in the time of trouble, and can even mitigate a great part of it. Florence, I warned thee before the rest; for from thee, as the centre of Italy, shall the Reformation proceed—from hence shall all Italy be renewed. Therefore has God favoured thee before all cities of Italy, has opened to thee the Scriptures, and revealed to thee the troubles that were to come; that thou mightest prepare thyself, has Himself shown to thee how thou shouldst conduct thyself.

'But the false and lukewarm perverted the people, and prejudiced it against the truth—before all, the wicked priests and servants of the Church are the guilty cause of this corruption, as also of the coming misfortune. Some practise simony—others gambol in the evening—keep concubines in the night, and come with sin in the morning to mass. Others go from riding and hunting to the sacred office. O ye priests and heads of the Church of Christ! leave your benefices of which you cannot be rightly in possession, leave your wanton pleasures—your clubs—leave your voluptuous and unnaturally obscene life, while it is yet time to repent, and keep your masses with devotion. O ye monks! leave the expense in clothes and silver decorations—your fat abbeys and benefices—give yourselves up to simplicity, and work with your hands as the old monks did, your reverend predecessors. If you do it not willingly, you will soon do it by compulsion—for God will punish you, if you change not your life and manners. O my brothers! I say to you, leave off the superfluity—the images and other vanities wherewith you withdraw your alms

from the poor. If you do not hear the Divine warning, you will not escape punishment. Ye merchants! leave off usury—give back what you have unjustly gained, but of your superfluity give to the poor. O ye priests!—to you must I once again return, (I speak of the bad, without prejudice to the reverence due to the good,) leave off the accursed unnameable vices which bring God's anger upon you.

'But is it not frightful that the people live better than the clergy? And you who have your houses full of vanity, improper images and godless books, bring all that to me, to burn it to God's honour, that if the anger of God comes, nothing of the sort may be found among you. Remove those sad books which contain nothing but wantonness and smuttiness. There is, in truth, a great number of books in the world which should be destroyed for the good of faith and religion, though in other respects they may not be wholly useless.'

By a government framed after such principles as he proposed, Savonarola thought, if the abuses denounced by him were abolished, and a better system of living introduced, he might fairly assume that the desirable ecclesiastical and moral reform was commenced. 'Let the first reform,' he said, 'be that a holy, worthy worship of God be brought in, and all be removed which disturbs the same, as unsuitable to his dignity and purity. Even the better part of what now exists, would gain by simplification, for not by many masses is God worthily honoured. Were it possible that a mass only were read every Sunday, one would certainly have more devotion and reverence at it than now.'

It was a necessary consequence of these principles, that the reform of the clergy itself should be demanded, by the removal of all its baser members, who by their example justified the laity in wanton-

ness, and by providing for the honest service of the Church, with the consent and authority however of the Pope. This reform should be first undertaken in the daily life and walk of the priesthood, insisting on a return to simple manners, and the observance of decency; and especially, by vigorously proceeding against the practice of obscene and unnatural vices. Savonarola denounces with especial zeal all degrading pleasures, all gaming and drinking clubs, all studiously attractive and wanton clothing of women, all feminine ornaments of men, as leading to destruction, and injurious to the health of the soul. He would have them prohibited by stringent legislation. Not that he wished to condemn a style of living decently, according to station and ability — (indeed, he is anxious to provide for this,) but he contended that it might be united with greater simplicity. In particular, all unchaste women he would have had banished from the State of Florence, and all such found within it severely punished.

'Likewise,' he continues, 'it is the business of the State to provide for the best possible education of children — to form good citizens from them. Even in respect to their corporeal welfare, the State should look to it that marriages should neither be made too young nor too old—for from both these come our weakly children. Mothers' milk should nourish the little ones—the boys should abstain from wine—the youths accustom themselves to hardships and all weathers—should strengthen their bodies by gymnastic exercises—and for amusement occupy themselves with music—they should remain far from evil talk, and all that is unbecoming—should not go about with servants, but rather be instructed in religion and liberal arts, and brought up in refined manners. Formerly, the mothers suckled their children at their own breasts, and truly you do an in-

justice in giving them over to rude nurses, that they may also become rude in their mind, passionate, angry, obstinate. For the first milk has great influence on the temperament of children—thus they become half your children and half not. Ye fathers! let your children learn grammar, and keep able men as teachers who are accomplished, and not players—pay them well, and see that the schools are no holes and corners. All should practise grammar in some degree, for it wakens the mind and helps much. But the poets should thereby not destroy everything else. There should be a law made that no bad poet should be read in the schools, such as Ovid—de Arte Amandi, Tibullus, and Catullus—of the same sort, Terence in many places. Virgil and Cicero I would suffer. Homer in the Greek, and also some passages from Augustine's *Civitate Dei*—or from Jerome, or something out of the Holy Scripture. And where you teachers find in those books Jupiter, Pluto, and the like-named, say then—children, these are fables, and show them that God alone rules the world. So would the children be brought up at once in wisdom and in truth; and God would be with them.'

By such a scheme of moral improvement, (which in some parts, it must be confessed, is perplexed with certain prejudices that are due to the then existing state of things and local circumstances,) Savonarola trusted that Florence would acquire wealth and esteem, and even recover some of the possessions she had lost,

'Till now,' said he, 'I was the prophet Jonas who warned Nineveh. But I say to you, that if you do not hear my words, I will from henceforth become the prophet Jeremiah, who long before announced the destruction of Jerusalem, and afterwards wept over the same destroyed; for God will renew his Church, and this has never been done without blood.

Italy and Rome, where all crimes especially accumulate, will not escape the Divine punishment. It will go above and under; the proud Rome will be no more; but I say not when, nor how, nor by whom.'

This conviction, that the renewing of the Church, and the Reformation of Italy, might only be wrought by the force of arms, or at least only amidst such sensible demonstrations, Savonarola continually expressed with as much decision, as that the renovation itself was inevitable. With this notion he had been accused, indeed, of stirring up the people—but he defended himself from the charge by pleading the manner in which he had been careful to announce it. No doubt, however, in the popular sense in which it was understood by the majority of hearers, it had great influence. They could not fail to be moved by the authoritative announcement that foreign armies should invade Italy for a scourge, and as the actual signs of the wrath of God, because of the corruption of the Church, and the obstinacy of those who were unprepared for improvement. Even though such improvement itself should thereby suffer, yet would Savonarola have his hearers pray for the hastening of the troubles, that therewith the renewing of the Church might be hastened. But for these troubles he warned them not to make ready with arms, but to equip themselves with penitence and prayer. With such admonitions he sought to soothe the public agitation. For himself, he appears at this stage of his progress to have become all at once remarkably collected and concentrated. So passionless, so clear, so quiet and meditative, that not only could he himself appeal subsequently to this singular tranquillity of mind, but his contemporaries have testified to the fact, and quoted it as evidence of his having been confirmed in his course by the assurance of an inward voice.

But though thus patient, Savonarola was nevertheless not content to postpone his reforms to a future age. What if he had given, as it were, but the mere platform of a constitution, he was not willing to wait till a very distant time for its realization. Well he knew, indeed, as he even declared, that 'great things are not permitted to be easily completed, but this is only an argument that there exists so much the more need of an earnest, incessant, striving for something further, so far as our powers and circumstances will permit.' He therefore was not willing to rest contented with the limited system of government first designed, and accordingly the scheme of the Accopiatori was very early opposed, and instead, an attempt was made to extend the legislative power to the citizens at large. This being strongly seconded in a sermon by Savonarola, who moreover asserted that no ruling authority should be recognized but that of Christ, the newly-elected magistrates voluntarily abdicated their offices, the example being set by the spontaneous resignation of Giuliano Salviati.

To establish the government on a more popular basis, the legislative power of the State was at length vested in the council of the citizens (consiglio maggiori), and in a select body, called select council (consiglio degli scelti). The first of these was to be composed of at least one thousand citizens, who could derive their citizenship by descent, and were upwards of thirty years of age; the latter consisted of a committee of eighty members, who were elected half-yearly from the great council, and were upwards of forty years of age.

On December 23, 1494, the great college of the council was concluded, with the committee of eighty for the administration, and soon thereupon the general peace and amnesty for the Medici was announced. By this the new Medicean party, the proper great

ones of Florence, were openly offended in the most sensible point, and so much the more exasperated as they were doubly deceived in their efforts, and were yet obliged to conceal the real ground of their dissatisfaction, in order to maintain at least the appearance of popularity. While they, therefore, knew how to strengthen themselves by private alliances with other princes of Italy, among whom the duke of Milan showed a lively interest;—yet, to maintain some opposition against the new government, they sought to render suspicious to the people the character of the man, whose political influence began to be so troublesome to them; but the accusations which they spread obtained little or no credit. Nevertheless, the pleasure-loving titled youths, who had else concerned themselves little with the political opinions and behaviour of Savonarola, joined his accusers, because in consequence of his eternal moralizing, life had been rendered too strict for them. The Arabbiati and Compagnacci were thus brought into a serious collision with the Frateschi and Piagnoni, which menaced even Savonarola with danger.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PROPHET OF FLORENCE AND THE POPE OF ROME.

Relative position of Savonarola and the reigning Pope, and the clergy—His prevision of martyrdom—His perpetual testimony against the abuses and apostacy of the Church—Conspiracy of the Medici and Fra Mariano, at Rome, against him—Called by the Pope to preach at Lucca—Appeal against this of the Florentine magistracy and signory—Permitted accordingly to remain at Florence—Subsequent conduct. Agitation of the Pope.

THE state of the Church in the days of Savonarola, and the character of its visible head at Rome, must both be well considered, if we would duly estimate the relation in which the 'True Monk' of Florence stood with all false monks whatsoever, with a degenerate clergy, and a pontiff not only completely secularized, but absolutely demoralized. The interest of that portion of his story at which we have now arrived, requires this both of author and reader as a sacred duty.

Savonarola had not feared to denounce the crying evils of those terrible times, charged with guilt so gross and abominable, that ordinary delicacy prevents even a bold writer from doing justice to the subject, by giving illustrative details of the enormities committed. There are passages in Savonarola's sermons

designed for their condemnation, which dare not be translated; nay, to which even no allusion can be made—such was the iniquity of the period. We are not ready enough to consider these facts, when we charge such a character with illicit fanaticism, undue enthusiasm, or extravagant pretension. We forget the indignation which the moralist cannot help now feeling when only reading the deeds that Savonarola saw acted—we forget the sanctity of his calling, the earnestness of his spirit, and the responsibility he was compelled to incur. To support this, a strong faith, a holy hope, an ardent love, were needed—and given.

In perusing some of the sermons of Savonarola, one is affected even to tears, by the consciousness which he displays of the duty to which he was called, the peril by which he was surrounded, and the death that awaited him. In all this, he presents a striking contrast to Luther, both in the progress and the personal issue of his mission. Luther proceeded all along in the dark, not foreseeing the ultimate end to which his earlier efforts were the preludes. Savonarola, on the contrary, from the first, was aware of what ought to be done, and of what he had to do; nay, of what would be done after his expected martyrdom, for the reformation of the Church. He was a prophet, inasmuch as in his character and conduct he anticipated a future age. He was a prophet, inasmuch as he announced in words the designs of Providence relative to the advening generation. It was nothing less than the vigilant grace of God which saved Savonarola in Italy, as only the previous century it had saved Wickliff in England, from the falsehood, guilt, and folly which everywhere, even in the seats of learning and religion, surrounded both, and sent them equally to the study of the sacred Scriptures. If we deny to such men a Divine mission, there are no grounds for granting it to any.

Nothing but this watchful and Divine mercy would have been sufficient to maintain the soul of Savonarola through the storm, which henceforth he had to encounter, in that state of tranquil and perfect confidence which was a marvel both to his friends and foes. He felt himself safe, whether on earth or in heaven, in whatever labyrinth he might be awhile perplexed. Had he dared follow his own inclinations, he would have remained in his cell retired in celestial contemplations—but God had active duties for him to perform, and he shrank not from their performance. Notwithstanding all the terrors that began to encompass him, he still slept in peace, and calmly resigned himself to the conviction that he was doing the work of a Master who was able to defend and reward his servant—one who would conduct him through it prosperously; who would not, even by his death, let it be hindered, even though all the armies of earth were to encamp themselves for its prevention. The work once begun, could not be even suspended. Should he die, God would send another messenger more powerful or fortunate than he.

'Wonder ye!'—thus he demanded of his astonished hearers, when preaching on this very point—'Wonder ye that the good work has so many enemies? Even Christ had constantly to contend with the Pharisees and Scribes.' What follows demands attention.

'Do you ask me in general, what will be the end of the conflict? I answer, Victory! But if you ask me in particular? then I answer, Death! But death is not extinction! Rather, it serves to spread abroad the light! This light, as I have evermore declared, is spread wider than you believe. It is already in many hearts. And if you knew how many were enlightened thereby, not only here but in various places, you would be astonished, and change your lives. Write to Rome, that this light is kindled in

all places, howbeit it is not yet known, yet will it soon be perceived, and divisions spring up therefrom. But Rome shall not quench this fire, as nevertheless it will endeavour to do. Nay, if it quenches it in one, then will another and a stronger break out. I say to you, this light will be kindled in Rome and all Italy, among bishops and cardinals; even worldly princes and great men will protect it and promote it, when it is time; indeed, I have already many letters from several, declaring that they are prepared for its sake to lose their lives. Write, that I invite all the learned men of Florence, Rome, and Italy, to oppose this truth, and that I am ready to defend it in every way.'

Before Savonarola had other learned men, such as Occham and Marsilius, complained of the popes' intrusions and usurpations upon kings—such as Guido and Armachanus had exposed the sundry abuses of friars and monks, in upholding this usurped power—such as Abelard had declared the right faith in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—such as Bradwardine had recognized the nature of a sinful soul's justification by faith, in contradiction to Pelagian errors—to say nothing of those who, like Wickliff, had shrewdly suspected that the pope was Antichrist, a suspicion corroborated by the fact of his denying to competent men the liberty of preaching the Gospel, and foisting ignorant pastors on the Church of 'the all-wise God.' Truly has it been written, that 'in those days most monks and ministers never read at all, and the monasteries which, during the first ages of the Church, had been the retreats of learning and the muses, were filled with whole herds of luxurious drones, devoted servants of their appetites, who frequented the cellar more than the library of the convent, and dearly loved the flesh-pots of Egypt, but cared little for the wisdom of the Egyptians.'

'What!' says Savonarola, in one of his admirable sermons, of 1493, 'What have not the wicked prelates done? They feared the people would slip out of their hands, and withdraw itself from its obedience. Therefore they acted as tyrants of cities are wont to act. These murder the rightly-disposed and God-fearing, or put them in prison, so that they succeed to no post of State; secondly, all good laws, manners, and customs which are for freedom, they abolish, or affect that men think no more of them; thirdly, that the people may think of no innovation, they keep them busy with festivals, and show-processions. The same has happened with the Church of Jesus Christ; first, they have cleared the good preachers and prelates out of the way, and chose not that the direction of affairs should be entrusted to them; secondly, they have abolished the good laws and manners—ay, do not even wish that men should name them by their name; thirdly, they have brought in festivals and customs to destroy and abolish those which were commanded by God—if you go to these ceremonious prelates, look, they have the best words to their hand which one can listen to. If you complain to them of the present distress of the Church, you will at once hear—yes, father, you are right—one can no more live if God does not renew us. Faith is going to ruin. But in their heart they keep their wickedness, and make God's festival the devil's festival. Then says one to another—what do you think of our Christian faith?—what do you take it for?—and the other answers—now you appear before me as a very sneak. Faith is only a dream—a thing for sentimental women and monks. These clergy have no clerical judgement—know nothing of distinguishing between the true and false, the sweet and bitter. The care of souls lies no more at their hearts—it is sufficient to draw the incomes.'

Savonarola had been seven years in Florence, and all that time had, with the zeal of a prophet, borne witness to the justice of God and the sinfulness of man, announcing with truth the burthen of the times, and prescribing the means of deliverance, crying aloud for the Reformation both of Church and State. 'Grace,' he would exclaim, 'destroys not nature, but perfects it. One makes the Lord to speak sharp and strong, like Asaph, another mildly and amiably, like David. Wonder not, if thou hearest faithful men ofttimes call down the plagues of God; for what they do, they do out of zeal for the house of God. So likewise Asaph could not contain himself, when he saw the destruction of the house of God, but let the lyre sound fearfully, and spake:—'Lift up, Lord, thy hands against the godless and vain-glorious!' (Ps. lxxiii. 3[1].) For such zeal is none other than an exceeding love in the heart for righteousness, which will not rest, but ever seeks to remove everything that is contrary to the honour of God. . . . Lift up, Lord, thy hands, against these high-minded prelates, kings, and princes, who have destroyed the people, thy left hand for their temporal punishment, thy right for their eternal. For what scandalous evil has not the enemy practised against thy holy One! I meditated on this matter by myself, and it seemed to me that I saw a glorious temple of marble, inlaid with gold, with pillars of porphyry, with gates of costly precious stones, the sanctuary of mosaic, and the choir of the finest ivory[2]. Over it was

[1] These references are to the Catholic, not the Protestant Scriptures, and differ in number and diction—often in meaning. Our version, for instance, reads 'feet,' and the whole passage varies.

[2] This allegory in some parts resembles the vision related at the end of the fourth chapter of this book, but it differs in others. Savonarola often repeats himself, and this is given as an example of his manner of doing so.

written, 'Solomon the king has built this to the King of kings, and Lord of lords.' Secretly in the night many came and sought to destroy this temple. Some brought with them axes and mallets, to beat in the doors, others threw fire into the building, and others defiled the holiest place. The glorious temple sank; but soon they set to work and built a new. Now it was all of wood, but it was painted like marble and porphyry, and covered with gold and silver. I saw the priests in their canonicals, with silver staves; before them went the singers, and sang so finely and lovelily, that men believed that Paradise had disclosed itself. All the people around shouted with astonishment, and said, Truly our temple becomes daily still more beautiful, never was there so fair a temple as ours. In a short time, however, the roof fell through, because it could no longer bear the weight, and buried all that was therein. Now wouldst thou know the meaning of this vision? The first temple is the original apostolic Church, edified of living stones, namely, of Christians, who were grounded in the faith, united together with the cement of Love, for they were *one* heart and *one* soul in Jesus Christ, who was the corner-stone. Hewn out and prepared were they by the persecution of tyrants. The temple shone with gold, it was the gold of heavenly wisdom; the pillars, which were raised therein, were the prophets and apostles, on whose foundations Christians are built up. Everything was gloriously conformed one to another; it was a peaceful garden of God upon earth. But the devil, the enemy of the Lord and his Church, now laboured to destroy this temple. He took Jews, Romans, heretics, to help him; all in vain; they stood him in no stead. Now he bethought himself of another mode. He took the lukewarm in the Church itself, and the faithless brothers into his pay, and let them appear in sheep's

clothing; that is, they fast, make prayers, give alms, impose penances on themselves, in short, do all things that true Christians do externally. And lo! the work of the devil now prospers! These are the members who by their lukewarmness destroy the Church of Christ, and by their hypocrisy have corrupted all. The ground was now cleared away. Men thought of the apostles and prophets no more. The pillars of the Church are cast down upon the earth, and evangelic doctrine is heard no more. The gold of the temple is gone; the true Divine wisdom, which enlightens and gladdens the heart. The roof of the Church has fallen in; in the storm and the whirlwind are swept away the devout priests and princes, who adorn the bride of Jesus. The binding lime and mortar fail. Where seest thou now-a-days true love among Christians! No more are they united in Christ Jesus—therefore no one seeks the good of the other, but each one only his own. All the walls of the Church are undermined. Where is the justice of princes and rulers? where the pastoral truth of preachers? where the obedience of subjects? All the costly and precious things of the Church are stolen. The revenues of the Church are perverted to perishable pomp and worldly ends. And the sin of the devil's children is doubled; for they pride themselves in their deed, and boast that they have made broad the way of the Christian life, and publish their vices for virtues. . . . Cursing and swearing are tokens with them of manly courage; prodigality they esteem liberality; fraud upon their neighbour, laudable prudence; self-revenge, honour; ostentation, virtue. With the fires of ambition, of avarice, of envy, they enkindle the sanctuary. And not only have they destroyed the true Church, but they have made another after their own fashion. This is the *modern* Church, not built of living stones

on the basis of faith, but of wood,—that is to say, of Christians who are prepared as tinder for hell-fire. But there is that in our temple which is sufficiently satisfactory to us—it is so beautifully painted and gilded. Our Church has much external beautiful ceremony; with glorious robes, with silver and golden candlesticks, so that it is pronounced truly magnificent. One exercises the ecclesiastical functions. There seest thou great prelates with ecclesiastical harlots, shining with gold and precious stones, in magnificent vestments at the altar; there hearest thou an adagio from the beautiful vespers and matins, that will enchant thine ear. Thou thinkest that these must yet be all honourable and holy men, and that what they say and do we must hold as gospel. Behold! thus is the modern Church made. The people divert themselves with these vanities, and rejoice over these ceremonies, and say, never has the Church of Jesus Christ flourished so gloriously, never was the worship of God so beautifully supported, as now. As once a great prelate said, never was the Church so honoured, and never had the prelates such respect, so that the first prelates were actually but as prelatuzzi, compared with our moderns. But methinks, that Asaph rounded these words into my ears: Well! the first prelates were lowly and poor, had neither great episcopacy nor rich abbeys, like the present, had no mitres bedaubed with gold, had not so many chalices, and yet what they had they abstained from, to help the wants of the poor withal;—while our prelates, in order to bring together chalices, rob the poor of those things they cannot live without. Knowest thou what I will say? In the primitive Church were the chalices of wood, and the prelates of gold; in our days, the prelates are of wood, and the chalices of gold. Thus St. Thomas Aquinas once declared himself to a great prelate, who was

apparently one of the present stamp; and who had exhibited to the saint a great washing-basin, and perhaps several, full of ducats, and said, Look here, Master Thomas, now can the Church no more say, as St. Peter said—silver and gold have I not. That is true, replied Thomas;—but she cannot also say, what immediately follows thereon—in the name of Jesus Christ, stand up and walk! And I tell you, what my vision announced to me will happen. The roof will fall in upon us, the heavy sins of ecclesiastical servants as well as of the princes, will be all buried together with the pomp of festivals; then will they discover too late, that they have made themselves too secure under its covering.'

Those alarming corruptions and abuses of the Church, which with a strange and terrible novelty so forcibly impressed both Wickliff and Luther in their visit to Rome, were familiar to Savonarola from his earliest days. Even from then till now had he resided within the tabernacles of sin,—had lived in the midst of a thick darkness, which, like that brought upon Egypt by Moses, could be handled. He had constantly felt and touched the wickedness of which the earlier and later Reformer had for a long time only dreamed, and even for all that period had not only observed, but experienced the effects of the system of Romish superstition in destroying the faith and purity of the gospel, in paralyzing the conscience, depraving the heart, deadening and lulling the intellect till it became sluggish in its researches after truth, chaining up in those fetters of error and custom, which are stronger than fetters of iron, the free-born reason of man, and giving for money, a chartered indulgence to the most horrid sins and licentiousness. All this he knew and felt, and was constantly filled with holy zeal and indignation against the pressing and increasing evil. And now, at the head of its

power, was none other than that incarnation of Satan himself, Alexander VI. The first paroxysm of wrath with which he received this fact having passed away, he settled down into a frame of mind that seems to have concentrated itself in a deep determination to resist the further encroachments of the Man of Sin, and stem the Mystery of Iniquity that was now coming like an ocean torrent on the world, or to perish in the attempt. In the persons of the prophet of Florence and the Pope of Rome, two Systems had met in collision, and what the immediate event would be, was as yet undecided by the Great Disposer.

To the infallibility affirmed as belonging to that ambitious, tyrannous, and wicked apostate, whom our own Wickliff described as 'the proud worldly priest of Rome, the most cursed of clippers and purse carvers,' Savonarola ventured on the bold step of opposing his own. Hence, and always with the same confidence, he repeated the assurance, that it was impossible for him to err—else God himself might err. By which assurance it was generally understood, that he signified the immediate and supernal certainty of his cause and doctrine. To those who opposed him, he declared that God would not permit a man, who sought only the general welfare and safety, to err, . . . especially after he had worthily prepared himself for his vocation, meditating thereon day and night, and proposing therein the promotion of God's glory, and not his own honour. For such reasons, therefore, he was ready to part with life itself, when demanded.

In all this, however, he was careful to describe the certainty he felt as purely subjective; as indubitably true, and valid for himself only, not for others. Thus he says, in answer to the enquiry, whether what he preached were as certain as the ancient Scriptures and the Gospels, that in what

concerned himself, it was as certain as the Gospel; but in what concerned others, he defended it not; adding, that they who doubted it, sinned merely through unbelief, being led to judge rather according to appearances than righteously, simply because God had not granted so much seeming weight to his words, as to those of holy writ. But such unbelief, nevertheless, would become sin, in case a stiffnecked opposition should proceed exclusively from an evil root in the heart of the unbeliever,—especially with such as had experienced many confirmations and transactions that had gone far to prove the verity of his claims. For such, he knew not how they could justify themselves.

Some carnal minds, too, as always happens on occasions of this sort, had expected, that Savonarola should confirm the truth of his mission by miracles, and thus convict them of unbelief. These he met with the explanation, that miracles were not necessary, that every man had a natural ability to know the truth, and which in the good and pious had expressed itself clearly and strongly in his favour. Even the Apostles had converted more through precept and example, than through miracles; for miracles fail in making men believe. If, however, an outward demonstration were demanded, whether what he had preached was true, and of God, then he averred that the following particulars deserved attentive consideration. He had at no time retracted his word;—he became daily more and more confirmed in his convictions;—the good by his means became better, the bad yet worse. And, finally, his cause must long since have been lost, if its truth had not maintained it. Nay, was it not in itself an expressive sign, that so many people stood up against one poor impotent monk, and yet the matter continued to progress?

The information of his proceedings at Florence, which Savonarola desired might reach the Pope, lingered not on its way to Rome. It sped on the wings of the wind. The expelled Medici were there, anxious to hear and propagate any rumour which might afford them the least chance of a return to power. They even took up the settled business of the separation of San Marco from the Lombard congregation, and the new monastic establishment there, and at Fièsole, though sanctioned by the Pope, as a means of agitation. But they speculated on the Pontiff's known want of faith, and depended on his shameless dishonesty for the success of their plans.

Savonarola's aim in that affair had been to unite those who desired it in a more intimate brotherhood with himself; and the circumstances attending it were favourable for accomplishing their mutual wishes. The cloister of San Marco at Florence, and San Domenico at Fièsole, originally belonged to a Tuscan province, and had only recently joined the Lombard congregation, by reason of a pestilence, which laid waste many cloisters of Etruria, and these among them. Savonarola first won over to his view the general and the protector of the Dominican order, Gioachimo Turriano, and Olivieri Caraffa, who concurred with him in thinking that it was desirable that the two cloisters in dispute should be again separated from the Lombard congregation, and be subject to a voluntary stricter discipline. Caraffa brought the business before Alexander VI., but at the time he did so there was a consistory, and the Pope had declared that he would seal no brief on that day. The other cardinals being away, Caraffa found himself alone with the Pope, and was—(how characteristic of Alexander VI. is this little incident!)—allowed by his holiness to take the seal-ring from his finger, and seal himself the original recognizance, which con-

tained the desired confirmation for the new congregation. Shortly after Caraffa had retired, there came messengers from the Lombard congregation with written powers to prevent the grant—but the Pope answered them, that they had arrived a quarter of an hour too late, the matter having been already decided. Trifling as this transaction may seem, it obtained much consideration and opposition, especially as the cloister reform proved of an extensive nature, and was therefore much canvassed, both by those who saw therein a dangerous innovation, and by those who had felt themselves annoyed by the free preaching of Savonarola; Ludovico Sforza, Pietro de' Medici, the king of Naples, and the prince of Bologna, were united in opposition, and demanded the re-incorporation of San Marco and San Domenico with the Lombard congregation.

Savonarola had also another enemy at Rome, the jealous Mariano da Ghenezzano, who since his memorable defeat at Florence, had exerted himself in the papal court to procure the disgrace of his successful rival in pulpit eloquence. When in the cardinals' college, while delivering his propositions, Mariano would often turn to the Pope, and thus address him: 'Destroy, destroy, all-holy Father! this servant of the devil, this scandal to the whole Church.' Savonarola was not without a knowledge of Mariano's proceedings, but comforted himself in the words of the Psalmist — Ps. xxii. 17. 'Many dogs have encompassed me about, the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me,' adding, 'they evilly wrest my words, and say, I have scandalously attacked the papal name; but many thousands among my hearers can witness for me, what I have said; and among the throng of published writings and sermons, mine lie before the eyes of all.' Mariano had, in fact, previously to his apostasy, gone farther in condemning

the papacy than Savonarola, and the rashness of the former in this respect was frequently charged on him defensively by the latter. All the more, perhaps, Mariano found it needful to make an extraordinary display of his new-born zeal, by exciting the resentment of the Pope of Rome against the now acknowledged leader of religious and political opinion at Florence,—one who had taken part with that France which had offered the first resistance to papal assumption, and with a monarch whose great object was to elicit a spiritual opposition against it—one who had boldly denounced the vices of the Church, and of the pontifical court—and who continued not only to discuss the necessity of ecclesiastical regeneration, but to announce its near approach;—this being still the burthen of his testimony, 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!'

Operated upon by influences such as these, and induced further by the discontents of the Lombard congregation, Alexander VI. determined to take up the challenge tendered by Savonarola. A papal brief accordingly arrived in Florence, directing Savonarola not to preach, as appointed, at Florence during the Lent of 1495, but at Lucca. It was the Pope's policy therefore to remove him from Florence. Savonarola penetrated at once the cunning of his enemies in this ostensible estimation of his oratorical powers; but yet, because he thought he had done the State as much good service as could be expected from an individual, and might now for a while safely leave the City to itself, he prepared to obey the command of his holiness, though not without expressing publicly his reluctance, and chiding the Florentines for their frequent disobedience, adding tauntingly, that when he was absent they might manage matters in their own way. 'I,' he exclaimed, 'will no more trouble myself about anything. Send

not to me—though the king of France or the Emperor come, I will not. Do in your Council what your spirit may prompt! Now I will give place to anger. Must I then go to Lucca to preach, and thence perhaps further? Pray God that it may be permitted me to preach the Gospel to the unbelieving. But we commend our bark to God, that He may come to its aid if it strike on rocks.'

The mortification these words express, was that of a man who loved Florence to his soul, and could not leave her without the passionate reproaches of an affection that had been often offended, and had as often forgiven. It found an echo in popular sympathy—the magistracy interfered, and, to allay the restlessness of the general mind, wrote to the Pope, praying him to withdraw his direction. The Signory, likewise, sent a letter expressing their astonishment, that the authorities in Rome should be incautious enough to believe, or men be found bold enough to utter such calumnies of such a man, assuring the pontiff that Savonarola had never in his preaching put out of sight the claims of duty and the rights of office, but had only, in a general manner, denounced equally the failings and vices of the great and of the people.

This manifestation in his favour, however gratifying to Savonarola's feelings, incurred his censure. 'My children,' he said, 'you have done wrong, in being so zealous about my honour. Do not so—for it is not well that all things should always go smoothly, —lest conceit should come of it. Strokes of fate are good—for they make us better. Leave only to God to provide!'

The solicitation, however, of the magistracy and the Signory, was effectual with the Pope. He consented to recall his brief, permitted Savonarola to preach during the Lent in Florence, and promised that he should not be compelled to quit it before

Easter. The discerning among the party of the Medici were fain to be content with this result, for they indisputably were better off under the shelter of the amnesty law, advocated by Savonarola, than they would have been under a one-sided government, if firmly established by the extreme democratic section, apart from a superior influence. The one desire of Savonarola was, to make Florence, by a well-regulated political freedom, a true Christian, a Divine State, which should esteem the law of God as the basis and standard of all ordinances. Animated by this sentiment, he laboured incessantly for the general peace and amnesty, as the beginning of a State life worthy of Christians.

'Thou knowest,' he would say, 'thou knowest, Florence! what the reason is on which I would establish this peace—it is because thou shouldst be a Spiritual State. I have always shown to thee on clear grounds that a kingdom is so much the stronger, the more spiritual it is, and so much the more spiritual, the nearer it relates itself with God. But with God no one can have communion, who makes not peace with his neighbour!'

In what manner Savonarola thought of his present and future position, and of his relation to the papal chair, will be best understood by an extract from a sermon which he preached on February 17, 1495, in reference to the proceedings between the Pope, himself, and the authorities of Florence.

'All things, according to Scripture, must serve to the good of the elect of God (and I see that there are many of them in Florence), so then also the present troubles. You have given me a proof of your love, in that you have this morning saluted me on the open place, with a psalm of the royal Prophet, and offered yourselves to make a guard around me, that I may not be put out of the way.

But, my beloved, we stand here, surrounded by the host of angels to contend against the devil and bad men—what need then have we for a further guard. No! we are joyful and certain of victory. But deceive thyself not, O people of Florence! So long as thou continuedst to live in thy old way, more in a continuous service of ceremony than of a true service of God, then hadst thou no opposition to fear—but now that the eyes of men are open to the light of eternity, spiritual wickedness will also augment, and the contest continue with greater severity. But it is certain, that the more the measure of wickedness becomes full, the more your redemption draws nigh, for God will punish the wicked and renew his Church. And the more we grow and increase in good, the sooner will the seed be prepared which God keeps for renovation. You wish to know why I lately suspended preaching, and at the same time left my post? Many say, oh! we know it well—there is an excommunication come which has forbidden you to preach. And were it even so, which thou wilt not be able to show, dost thou not then remember what I said to thee, that if even one such came it would count for nothing, and would not help the dealers in lies? Hear a parable. A citizen had a fine vineyard, which, by the good government of his son, brought much fruit. Some robbers in the neighbourhood had a great desire to plunder this property. But as the son guarded it from them, they wrote to his distant father that the son was a glutton, and a drunkard, and ruined his father's possession. They also sent at the same time several persons who had the appearance of respectable people, and who should confirm this. The father, who at a distance could not have ocular evidence of his son's work, believed the false statements, and called his son away—but the son, who clearly saw the vineyard in that case

must go to wreck, did not obey, but wrote back to his father that he was accused and intrigued against by calumniators. Tell me, does this son appear to thee to have acted well or ill? according to, or against the intention of his father? Thou, who writest so many lies to Rome, what wilt thou now write there? That I have said, that they shall not obey the Pope, and that I will not obey him? Truly, were the Lord of the vineyard here and saw the fruits, he would set little value on what thou writest, especially if he knew who thou art. One speaks to God with the heart, for God is a Spirit, and dwells in the hearts of believers, and sees all our thoughts and desires. The tongue also which speaks with God, is the power to put into form the conceptions of the heart, and the sighings of the inner man. But words are just these same conceptions, this holy longing. And because the gifts of grace of the Holy Spirit are not the same, so are also the tongues of the Spirit, which speak to God differently so soon as one is exercised by the Spirit. I will then speak with my God and say thus;—Lord, I confess that Thou art good, just, and Almighty, and that Thou art my God, who hast made me out of nothing. But I am dust and ashes, and yet will I speak confidently with Thee who wert crucified for me. Forgive me if I should appear too confident, and urgent in my speech to Thee. Thou, O Lord, who makest all things good, hast taken my heart from me, and practised the greatest deception that ever was practised on man. For after I had prayed to Thee a long time that Thou mightest grant me the favour, that I should never be bound to the superintendence over others, Thou hast done quite the contrary, and by degrees drawn me unawares to the place wherein I now stand. In short, I long for a quiet life—but Thou must bring me forward as the bird is caught with the lime twig.

Had I seen this, perhaps I should not stand here where now I stand. It has happened to me as with the fly, which aims at the light, and where it sees a blazing light flies to it, not knowing that it burns, and so singes its wings. Thou hast shown me thy light, at which I rejoiced; and as it was told me it was good to spread this light for the salvation of souls, I have come to the fire and have singed my wings. Yes, I am come to a deep sea, and long now for the haven again, and look everywhere around me, and see no possibility of returning. I will say to Thee with Jeremiah the prophet; Lord, Thou hast persuaded me, and I have let myself be persuaded. Thou hast been too strong for me, and hast conquered. But I on the other hand have become daily a scoff, and every one derides me. (Jer. xx. 7.) Now, Lord, because Thou knowest that I sail on so deep a sea, let thy will be done! But I pray, Lord, for this one favour, that I may always think on death with the firm hope of thinking on Thee. For as the covetous man fears no danger, either by water or land, because the treasure always floats in his heart, and before his eyes; and as lovers fear neither the dangers of night, nor any shame, because of the violent ardour which they bear in themselves —so, O Lord, will I, if Thou givest me the living knowledge of the glory which Thou hast prepared for thy elect, fear no danger on the sea of this world, but stand firm and joyful in the midst of all troubles. Now, Lord, I am then contented with this way to which Thou hast now persuaded me—for it is full of sweetness and piety. I thank Thee that Thou hast thought me worthy to make me an arrow in thy quiver, and to make me like Thee through sorrows and troubles. So now come forth, thou Satan! Awaken thy strength, set all thy tools in motion—

prepare all thy members against me, I fear not the least—for he who does not fear death, what shall he fear beside? Hear, says the devil, I will give thee good counsel—do not stir the sore place, wouldst thou live in peace. I desire not thy counsels and thy peace—for thy peace is no peace, and thy war breaks not my peace. I know well, that if I went to court and flattered the great masters of this world—if I punished not the vices of the monks and clergy, I should fare easier. I know well, men can do me much evil—but all men are vanity, lords, kings, emperor and pope, and therein are all alike. They live, indeed, a time, and can indeed in their time do much. But man vanishes like an image—the image in the mirror is an entirely fleeting thing—for when the man removes from the mirror the image is likewise departed. So when God turns away his face and withdraws his life-giving presence, the man is out of the world, as the image is out of the mirror. And therefore I fear no man, for I fear not the image, but him whose image it is. . . . Many say I have brought Italy into confusion—and this has been openly said to me. O ye foolish! who has bewitched you, that you have not listened to the truth? Where are then my troops, my treasures, with which I have troubled Italy? No, I will answer you, as Elias answered Ahab on a similar charge; I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house—for ye have left the commandment of the Lord, and have followed Baalim. I have not troubled Italy, but ye have done it, who have left God, who have despised the baptism and the holy blood of our Saviour, who have trafficked with his sacraments, who have wasted the heritage of his Church on harlots and panders, who practise no justice, oppress the poor, who are full of pride, ambition, envy,

hate, and are guilty of all filthy and unmentionable crimes, and so openly commit all these things, that heaven and earth cry for vengeance!'

Savonarola employed the liberty which was now accorded him, to preaching on the book of Job—and avoided as much as possible giving occasion to new accusations. He therefore forbore at the commencement of the course from all political and polemical digressions; confining himself within the limits of his subject, not however without reference to the publicly understood fundamental principle of all his discourses—Reform of the public and civil life in godly fear, and the restoration of a mutual understanding and general peace. Frequently, however, had he to complain that *his* Florence, ungrateful towards God, would not follow the warning voice, and blindly resisted to her ruin. And yet he sought only her advantage, unceasingly and at every sacrifice, while he feared neither danger, nor the displeasure of the great, nor the hate of the crowd. Therefore he was willing to persevere till the end, and prayed all who followed, to pray for him, that God would endow him with a full measure of power, to speak only for the welfare of the city, and the general good; warning them that they might never give due attention to his words, if they proceeded on passion, and not on the highest motives. The lukewarm in the Church he spared not—and turned from them to God. 'Yes, Lord!' he exclaimed, 'I turn to Thee; let me be thy sacrifice. Give me strength that I may willingly bear all insults, all disgraces, and all calamities, that on thy account I may be blamed by all as a fool. We stand on the battle-field, but doubt not that we shall conquer at last, and in every way, even dying; and in death shall fight more successfully than in life.'

We need not wonder that the powers of this world

were troubled by the assertion of such principles, seeing that these are the very spell-words by which they shall be eventually shaken, that the way may be prepared for the reign of Christ upon earth. Annoyed as Alexander VI. was by Savonarola's temerity, prudence suggested that he should avoid proceeding to extremities against a man so learned, pious, eloquent, and influential. Indeed, might he not make of him a friend instead of an enemy?—or might not other means be devised which, without implicating the papal chair, would suffice to silence or remove him? These must be tried.

One day, accordingly, the Pope sent for a bishop of the Dominican order, and said, 'I desire, that as a brother of the same order, you will answer the sermons of Savonarola, and controvert effectually their arguments.'

The caution of the prelate was equal to that of the pontiff, and he seems also to have had an advantage in possessing what the latter wanted—a conscience.

'Holy father!' (responded the bishop,) 'I am prepared to fulfil your commands; yet permit me to remark, that if I am to vanquish him, I must be supplied with arms.'

'Arms!—what arms?'—exclaimed the astonished pontiff.

'This monk,'—continued the bishop,—'says we ought not to keep concubines, commit simony, or be guilty of licentiousness. If in this he speaks truly, what shall I reply?'

'What then must we do with him?' enquired his holiness.

'Reward him,' answered the prelate; 'give him a red hat—make of him a cardinal and a friend at once. Send to him Ludovico, a man equally learned with himself, and let him argue with Savonarola, not forgetting, as his strongest argument, this offer—to

be promised, on condition that he abstains from prophesying, and retracts what he has said and written.'

With this advice, Alexander VI. was well pleased, and gave directions for carrying the same into immediate execution.

CHAPTER IX.

CITATION TO ROME.

Florence and Pisa—Domestic policy of former—Savonarola's letter to Charles VIII. betrayed to Alexander VI.—Pope's citation—Savonarola's sickness—Suspends and resumes his pastoral duties—Social Reforms—Increasing reputation—Singular Carnival—Auto da fe' of works of art, &c.—Injurious consequences—Self-examination—The troubler of Italy?—Ludovico.

CHARLES VIII. having taken Naples, the Florentines naturally expected the restoration of Pisa, which the French, however, still continued to besiege. The Pisans, on the contrary, wroth at their dependency on Florence, and groaning under oppression, still iterated the promise of the king that, after his withdrawal, they should be free. This double-minded conduct of the French monarch, which even his historian and, in part, companion, Philip de Comines, openly censures, and cannot excuse except on the score of pity to the Pisans, occasioned in Florence much disaffection, which grew to indignation, when the Pisans, at the commencement of the year 1495, obtained the assistance of the French in opposition to some warlike undertakings of the Florentines. At one time, accordingly, they refused, except

conditionally, the subsidies they had promised; and assuredly would have been followed by the other states and powers of Italy, in an insurrection against France, had they not been deterred by hate of the Duke of Milan, and the persuasion of Savonarola,—who, in the constant hope that Charles would securely proceed as God's powerful instrument for the Reformation of the Church, sought to tranquillize the people with the repeated assurance that the king must triumph, and that Florence by remaining true to him, would in that case regain all her lost possessions.

Savonarola had, indeed, maintained a correspondence with the conqueror. When Naples prepared to make head against the unbridled, headlong, contagious progress of the French, he wrote to the king, maintaining that 'this revolt was the first penal consequence of his having violated his word with Florence,' and reminding him afresh, that 'God would by him overthrow all the tyrants of Italy, and afterwards conduct the Turk into Christendom.' He afterwards complained that this letter, with many errors, was circulated, and had reason to dread its reaction upon himself, inasmuch as therein he had declared, that the Church at that time was without any true visible head, Alexander VI. having *purchased* his election by scandalous bribery, and having exhibited, as a man, such a degree of turpitude as was inconsistent with the Christian character, and virtually deprived him of all ecclesiastical authority. Charles VIII., whether moved thereto by this letter or not, actually in a manifesto which he afterwards published against Naples, proposed the calling of a general council. On his return from that place, he came into the neighbourhood of Florence, and was visited by Savonarola with an embassy in Poggibonsi, for the purpose of impressing upon him em-

phatically the duty of dealing well with the Florentines, and of freely restoring to them, according to agreement, the possession of Pisa; adding, that if the monarch did not do so willingly, he would be compelled, amidst severe judgments, by the Almighty. The king pleaded the inconveniences of a camp as the excuse for his breach of contract, and dismissed the embassy with half promises. He had also proposed that Savonarola should attend him to Pisa, and negotiate there the demands of the Florentines: this, however, Savonarola seems to have declined, as he returned to Florence, leaving Charles VIII. to make his way to Pisa alone. There the king was welcomed with great pomp and rich gifts, and at the same time assailed with urgent prayers for the freedom of the city. Finding thus, that idle words and pledges never meant to be redeemed, would not content either city; he disbanded his troops, and left them both to disentangle their own affairs for themselves.

Meanwhile, in Florence not only the foreign, but likewise the domestic policy of the State, required deep and wide deliberation. Savonarola continued, by his counsels and warnings, to acquire still greater influence. It was at the beginning of the year 1495, that the general amnesty was decided, and a law made, that persons accused of political offences should have a right of appeal to the Great Council. In consequence of a sermon of Savonarola, the twenty Accoppiatori, to whom hitherto as formerly the possession of the highest offices was entrusted, after the precedent of Giuliano Salviati, laid down this dignity in the May of 1495, whereupon, on July 1, the deficiency in the number of the elected was supplied by the Great Council itself.

About this time, the letter from Savonarola to the King of France was opened by foreign hands, and its contents disclosed to the Pope, who for a while dis-

guised his resentment, but with crafty hate determined to neglect no opportunity of getting the writer into the snares which henceforth he laid to entrap him. On July 21, Savonarola received a papal citation, in which it was stated, that 'his holiness had with joy and gratitude to God, received information that Savonarola had, with other labourers, shown himself especially active in the vineyard of the Lord. Nor did the Pope doubt but that he rightly employed the power of the Divine Spirit for the salvation of the common people. But it had at the same time been reported to him, that Savonarola predicted future events, and this not by his own human wisdom, but by means of Divine revelation;—hence he desired, as it belonged to his pastoral office, to speak with him on the subject, in order, if it was of God, to be better acquainted with him; and commanded him therefore, by the power of holy obedience, to come as soon as might be to Rome, where he would receive him with paternal love.'

This once, Providence delivered Savonarola. The exertions to which he had submitted had now affected his health. He was in the hands of his physician, and obedience to the citation was impossible, except at peril of his life. In the judgement too of all respectable and good citizens, his continued presence in Florence was at present expedient, for the perfecting of political arrangements yet in their infancy. He therefore printed for the further information of Alexander VI. what he had often declared touching the chastisement of Italy, and the renovation of the Church; and accompanied the document with an humble request that the Pope would accept his apology, and an assurance that as soon as impediments were removed, he would hasten to gratify his desire. In the mean time, owing to his indisposition, he was unable to preach from July 23 to October 11.

It was reported, that he had all this time been prohibited from preaching—but this was not the fact. No prohibition had arrived even up to the middle of the next year.—'Perhaps you imagine,' he then said, in a sermon, 'that I have received the command of the Pope not to preach. I will relieve you from the doubt—no command of the kind has come to me; but I have written to him. Moreover you may know, that under the present circumstances such a command could not be given, because it would be useless. On this, some will say, that you cannot judge. I answer: if the matter is in itself clear, it needs no further judgement. For there is not even a woman who cannot see that such an order would extend to the ruin of the city. Assuredly, if I were in doubt, whether such an order were, or not, to the prejudice of the vineyard, I must yield to higher judgement—but I am clear on the point. I cannot believe that such an order might come; for I know that they have understanding, and believe not false representations. I have written that I cannot do it, and have set forth such reasons as cannot be objected to. Should the pope, however, follow the false representations of the pharisee, and command me not to preach, then I would obey not the word, but the purpose; for such a command lies not in the purpose of the Pope when he is falsely informed. I believe not, that the Pope will do it, when he knows that it will prejudice the vineyard—I believe not, that he is of such a wicked disposition.'

Meanwhile, the place of the master orator, in the pulpit of San Marco, was supplied by one Domenico da Pescia, who, as a brother of the same Order and his great admirer, had, according to his ability, practised himself in the spirit and style of Savonarola's preaching. Savonarola himself was employed in composing his celebrated *Compendium Revelationum;*

a compilation of the contents of his sermons on the subject of the impending chastisement of Italy, and the renovation of the Church;—and also a second polemical essay in refutation of Astrology.

The first production was a work of self-defence. Many who attended his sermons took written notes, which from haste were not only incomplete, but inaccurate. Others, from misunderstanding, reported his discourses with additions and omissions, and had even in this manner already printed and published them. Of this he complains. 'Since,' says he, 'Almighty God may no more tolerate the increasing transgressions of Italy, especially those of its spiritual and political heads, He has resolved to redeem his Church by means of great chastisements. For the salvation of the elect, He has permitted nevertheless this scourge to be announced, that they might prepare themselves with confidence. Florence, as the heart of Italy, has been chosen for this announcement, that therefrom it might be spread abroad.'

Whether the author in this work has vindicated himself so well to this age, as to his own, may be disputed. The visionary character of some portions of this and other works, by the sceptical taste of later times might be disrelished. But if Fancy is ever the mother of deep Truth, she was such in the case of Savonarola. . . . What if he speaks of apparitions and revelations, of immense red and golden crosses in the sky—of unearthly voices, exhorting and reproving him—he was justified in such imaginations, by the belief and practice of his Church, and affected therein no singularity; not to mention that such phenomena in the pious mind are capable of rational explanation, both physically and metaphysically. Wherever he turned the leaf to read, or his eye to look, he met with such sensuous embodiments of

eternal verity, while, at the same time, in worldly experience, he was stimulated, by the presence of extraordinary crime and evil, to those moral and conditional denunciations, which are legitimately permitted to every spiritual professor, and are in their nature prophetic, though not so popularly understood. Vulgar belief carries the gift beyond moral limits, into the intellectual, even into the physical—and such also was the creed of the Church. In all this we should recognize no more than an anticipation of the excellence of which man, when complete in all his powers—when the lower perfectly represent the higher—may be capable. How near Savonarola was to this perfection, we know not; enough for us, that he sincerely believed himself authorized in what he said and did. It is therefore, without any repugnance, that we read in the Compendium such passages as these :—

'O people of Florence! if I have predicted anything as from God which has not been true, if the apostolic censure of me is valid, and if I deceive any one; in order that you may be illuminated by the truth, pray to God that He would send fire from heaven to consume me in presence of you all, as I also pray our Lord, three in one, whose body is in this most holy sacrament, that He would send death upon me in this place if I have not preached the pure and holy truth. I received these future things by another light than the interpretation of Scripture, which words are not taken from the sacred writings (as some think), but have nevertheless lately come from heaven. I said that the Florentines had yet to pass through many waters, and would have other trials; that Italy, and especially Rome, would fall, yet never saying by whom or when, or in what manner.'

Most of the sermons are to us at this time very pro-

lix, abounding in illustrations drawn from ancient notions of natural philosophy, and they are often thrown into the form of familiar dialogues.

'God will send a holy pope, this or another, for He can make holy whom He will.—Oh! what thinkest thou brother, dost thou think it will be this pope or another? I think it will be another; I do not by this assert that the good man will come immediately after the present, I say neither yes nor no, because I am not sent to tell this. Have you seen him, brother? have you see him? I will tell you the truth, it does not appear to me that I have ever seen him. Well then, brother, whence does he come? I do not know whether he is Italian or French, or Florentine, or from some other place. Would to God that I did know, I would go to visit him! Thou wouldest go, perhaps, that he might give thee a red hat? You do not understand; I explain to you, there will be no such times as these, then, nor so many red hats, nor so much pomp, but bishoprics and cardinalates shall be avoided in those days.' In another sermon he gives the reason for his silence on the first announcement of the pontifical displeasure. 'As I saw my leaving the city would occasion the spiritual and temporal ruin of the people, I would obey no living man who commanded me to go, both because such command would be contrary to the Divine will, and because I should presume this was not the intention of my superior, knowing that I should rather obey the intention than the words.'

Sometimes he descended to very minute particulars, upbraiding his auditors with the little use they had made of all their advantages. He says, 'Truly you ought already to be saints, having heard so much, yet it appears to me you will not understand; for instance, those women have much lukewarmness yet about them, those I mean who seem spiritual, and

then buy a veil to wear on their heads, which costs two ducats, so that you pretend to have turned and repented, but it is not so.'

The second work was directed against an error which Savonarola had often attacked in his sermons. So widely spread was it among all ranks and classes, that it threatened not only to stigmatize a particular age, but to prejudice religion and Christendom. The late Count Pico della Mirandola had written an important and vehement work against it. Savonarola wished to make the contents of that more learned treatise generally available by a popular mode of treatment, while he endeavoured to prove that Astrology was false, superstitious, and contrary to the Christian religion,—that it had been strongly condemned by the Church, and was utterly scorned by philosophy.

When Savonarola, on October 11, re-entered the pulpit, he thus greeted his hearers :—

'Now have we permitted the body to repose a little, and purpose in the first place two things ;—one to *strive*, and not to cease again from striving until death, but then to *conquer*, because the work of Christ must always conquer. Doubt not, even if I should die, that even in this way we should finally conquer. And were it so, like the Hydra of the poets, whose head when smitten off grew again sevenfold, even so would God waken up others. But we have this morning appeared anew on the plain of battle, for the purpose of ascertaining how the troops stand, and whether all things be fit to recommence the war.'

Savonarola had, in fact, to prepare for new struggles, not only against foes abroad, but traitors at home. Men had, indeed, listened to his admonitions, and their reformation seemed to have begun in earnest. The cultivation of the silk and cotton,

branches of industry which had been much neglected in corrupt times, again received attention. Every one desired to lend a hand in promoting the general prosperity. They abandoned their games, and said to every censurable practice, *It is forbidden!* 'Wonderful thing!' exclaims an Italian writer, 'that in a moment such a change of customs should take place!' One mischievous sport, di trare i sassi il carnescialle, annually entailed death on some who engaged in it, and yet was so much beloved by the people, that the magistrates had always failed in every attempt at its prohibition. But now, in consequence of Savonarola's influence, it was abandoned; and, at the festival time, in which it was usually played, a patricide, with a few mediatory words, was seen imploring the prayers of the good. Such were the symptoms of moral reform, so far as it had already been effected. But how difficult it is to restrain men within the bounds of moral order, and preserve them within the sheepfold of spiritual discipline! Though the influence of Savonarola's preaching had not been with itself suspended, yet was his voice needed to enforce the lessons that he had so energetically given. Men require precept upon precept, line upon line, living example, and the stimulus of agonistic heroism, as if the great and good were but actors upon the world's stage, for the incitement of indolent and undeveloped humanity in the world's theatre. Laws had been passed in Florence for the suppression of injurious crimes, and the promotion of beneficial objects and good manners. It was not long before the continual evil of man's heart, in significant murmurs, and by anonymous threatenings, evinced the desire of retaliation. But these were soon put down by the voluntary service of individual enthusiasts, while the gaming and drinking-places were abandoned by industrious artizans, and respectable citizens. The

advent of the year likewise was distinguished by a peculiar abstinence from sensual enjoyments, and celebrated with such an abundance of fasts, that even Lent itself elsewhere scarcely exhibited any thing resembling it.

Abroad the reputation of Savonarola so much increased, that many strangers, not only from the cities, but from the countries and mountains round about, of Bologna, Lucca, Prato, and Pisa, where he had likewise preached, came to Florence to hear him. In fact, the ample Duomo had scarcely room to contain the crowded audience; for youths above twelve years, who were permitted to attend, they were forced to construct along the wall, on both sides and opposite the pulpit, a sort of amphitheatre of benches and steps, in order to increase the accommodation of the body of the church.

The greatest perils of a teacher of truth commence with his popularity, and increase when he acquires disciples. A man who once has disciples is in their power; either they deny or betray him, or, with the best intentions, misrepresent him. There were three monks of his order who seemed desirous of sharing the celebrity of Savonarola—the above-named Domenico da Pescia, Thomas Bussino, and Silvester Maruffi. These men were of course inferior to their master in knowledge, and in their zeal accordingly less discreet. It happened that Savonarola had formed into an order a number of noble youths. Domenico da Pescia was appointed to provide them with sermons, and indeed to order the whole; Savonarola, from his many occupations, not having leisure personally to superintend them. They were marshalled under certain leaders or watchers, had arbitrators among themselves, correctors, almoners, lustrators to purify such holy things as had been defiled or discarded, and inquisitors.

The following are the rules drawn up for the guidance of this youthful order :—

'Every youth who wishes to be a son of Jesus Christ and a disciple of Father Girolamo and of his doctrine, must diligently observe the commandments of God and of the holy Roman Church, must be constant at confession and communion, fervent in solemn prayer and at preaching; must not be found at public worldly spectacles, such as theatres and masquerades. Their clothing should be simple, according to the condition of each, without slashings or other vanities. They should cut their hair close about their ears; avoid games and bad company like serpents; never hear or read impure books, either in their own language or in Latin; should shrink from lascivious poets as from deadly poison, and occupy themselves on festivals with divine things, not going to schools for fencing, dancing, singing, or playing.'

In a sermon already quoted, the reader will recollect that Savonarola had called upon his hearers, not only to surrender the luxuries of life, but even such works of the poets, and such specimens of art, as were in the least tainted with immorality. There was an excess in this, which is only to be justified on the principle that one extreme generates another, and that in his time an evil existed, only to be effectually met by asserting the opposite principle in its most rigid simplicity. An æsthetic cultivation had received the utmost encouragement, and yet had fallen short of securing religious excellence. Savonarola was well acquainted with the fact, and his own mind had been initiated into all the refinements of literature, poetry, and art. In all this, however, there was something wanting; they had failed to satisfy the higher wants of his own nature, quite as much as to effect the nobler reform of the city, to the legislation of which he had been appointed. It was natural therefore for

such a mind to believe, that an ascetic piety was needful to counteract the corruption which a polite philosophy had left untouched. His followers would be inclined to go further than this; less generously educated, and misapprehending the liberal arts, they would be apt to ascribe to them the very corruption which they had failed to cure. Nor must it be forgotten, that sometimes they have been enlisted in the service of vice, and employed to pollute the mind. Such men as Domenico da Pescia,—simply enthusiastic, and ignorant that the arts are so many degrees of developement, and responsible only for what they do, and not for what they leave undone, and that the above-named exceptions to their general tendency are perversions of their current, and not its uniform action, —will push ascetic practices into violent collision with more elegant accomplishments; not seeking charitably to supply their deficiencies, but unfortunately opposing their legitimate influence. What we have now to relate comes in illustration of these remarks.

Giuliano Salviati, one of the Piagnoni, who had acquired considerable notice by his resignation, was, as a follower of Savonarola, not only well inclined to carry out any design of Domenico da Pescia that seemed to agree with his master's doctrines, but able to give thereto the sanction of government, being Gonfaloniere in the year 1496. Thus encouraged, the order of youths above described, under the direction of the disciple just named, became guilty of an extravagance which has brought some discredit on their master's cause. From the time of the Advent to the time of the carnival, instead of the usual games and shows, troops of children, in orderly procession, divided into bands, were seen at different quarters of the town, each directed by a leader chosen from among their own number. These juvenile reformers, under the orders of Piagnoni, were charged with the expul-

sion from Florence of all obscene books, whether in Italian or Latin, wanton statues and pictures, and all other lascivious works of art,—whatever, in fact, contributed to lust and prurient appetite. Animated with this sacred project, these different regiments of young apostles went from house to house, and after stigmatizing all objects of censurable luxury they could discover with the title of anathema, and otherwise condemning them in the name of God and his holy Church, proceeded with much courteousness of manner and many prayers, to request that such articles might be delivered to them for destruction; on the receipt of which they spake on the house a brief blessing, prepared for them by Domenico da Pescia, and departed. Between the Advent and the carnival an immense number of wanton pictures, costly chess, dice, toys, cards, guitars, mirrors, perfumes, cosmetics, indecent pictures, profane works (including even the works of Boccaccio, the Morgante, books of dreams and magic), were collected. It had been customary during carnival to erect certain cabins in the market-places, to set them on fire on the eve of Ash-Wednesday, and bid them farewell amid the shouts of convivial mirth and the frolics of amorous dalliance: accordingly, when the day of carnival arrived, as a substitute for this spectacle, a pyramid composed of the matters just enumerated was erected, and forthwith surrounded by the immense crowds who receive gratification from public shows. The hero-bands of juvenile regenerators are also there, and the magistrates of Florence, in solemn state, to preside over the ceremonial sacrifice. Psalms and spiritual songs are sung; and while the voice of pious harmony floats on the air, the pile is fired, and the collection of lascivious items blazing up in the face of offended heaven, until the whole is consumed to ashes, and the reconciled power looks down on the expiring flames.

With them—so deemed the magistrates of Florence, no less than those young enthusiasts—vanity was also extinguished, and the city, in consequence, would be restored to godly simplicity..

Thus begun the carnival. During its progress there were many repetitions of the act on a small scale. Children and common people were wont to amuse themselves at this festival with throwing stones at passengers and each other, or erecting 'stili,'—long pieces of wood crossing the streets like a toll-bar, at which they levied contributions from all who wished to pass through, and spent the money in a riotous supper, or made bonfires, which usually occasioned many fights; but now they devoted the money, voluntarily contributed, to 'Monti di Pietà;' consequently these institutions became so prosperous, that the Jews, who had lived by usury, were almost driven out. Sometimes a splendid image of the infant Saviour was carried on a pedestal of gold by four beautiful boys, twelve supported a canopy over it, others followed in pairs, singing psalms and hymns, and even facetious invectives against the carnival; they were attended by almoners, who collected more then than in all the year besides, by men with red crosses, by girls and women. After parading in procession round the Duomo, four of the leaders would kindle the pile of vanities, amid the music of trumpets, fifes, and cornets.

This contest between the æsthetic and ascetic principles was dangerous, inasmuch as both parties could only exist by asserting extreme opinions that admitted of no compromise: it was easy also for the enemies of Savonarola to take advantage of such an incident. The juvenile order that had so prominently figured in this carnival-drama incurred considerable derision at its first formation; and to the contempt thus expressed were now added the complaints of those who

regretted the loss of so many treasures of art and articles of value. Soon came rumours of plots, and threatening letters directed against the life of Savonarola. The Ten of the Balia, which consisted of the signory and the college, issued a public caution against any attempt of the kind; a number also of his adherents accompanied him whenever he went to or returned from Fièsole, armed for his protection: even on his way from San Marco to the Duomo, he was often surrounded by hundreds of his friends.

Savonarola, however, did not make so much account of this new opposition as others; he preferred making it a motive for self-examination. 'Whence,' he demanded, 'is this vehement opposition on all sides against one insignificant individual? I said in my heart, Perhaps thou hast not well considered thy way, that thy tongue has uttered error; therefore I will prove all things first, whether I had perhaps erred in the sufficiency of human knowledge. Yet because solicitude on this account seemed unnecessary, I said, for such error I will not afflict myself, since it endangers not salvation, and in heaven we shall be gifted, in addition to all we now know, with a wisdom better than all knowledge. But, I said, perhaps thou hast erred in the matter of faith; yet on this side also I found my path holy, pure, and blameless, since I have always believed, and do believe all things that the holy Roman Church believes,—have always submitted myself to her, and do even now submit myself to her. Moreover, I thought whether I had erred in something that I had prophesied; but in this also I found no error, because I had foretold in word and writing, only what was given to me by Him who erreth not. Therefore I go further, to ascertain whether my desires be free from vanity, pride, and covetousness, or whether I preached any thing from such motives; and through the grace of

the Lord, I have found that I have preached for his honour and the welfare of souls. Moreover I have not found that any where an unworthy desire or inclination, or at any time anger or hate against my adversaries, moved me to preach. For (not to gain renown, but to speak the truth,) I can assert that I feel not the slightest pique or hatred against them, but lovingly pray to God that He will guide them to the light of truth. And after I had so found all the ways pure, I said, Lord! consider also further my ways.'

Whatever peace, however, Savonarola might win for his soul, his enemies would not permit his bodily estate to remain in quiet; he had to contend against both often-repeated and novel accusations. The restless agitation of political circumstances in Florence, and indeed all Italy, was even imputed to him, as partly at least the cause or occasion of it. 'It is not I who have disquieted Italy,' he replied, 'but you who have forgotten your God, who have despised the sacraments and trafficked with his ordinances, who have given his inheritance to harlots and panders, and, instead of practising justice, have oppressed the poor, being full of arrogance, fraud, envy, hate, lust, and all turpitude; all which things you so publicly do, that heaven and earth cry out for vengeance. It is not I who have disquieted Italy. No; I have only announced that the punishment which shall shake Italy will not delay.'

If, however, the question yet remains to be decided as to who had been the real troubler of Italy, no question exists but that Italy is troubled; not only the monk Savonarola, but Pope Alexander VI. is conscious of that alarming fact. Means must therefore be taken to settle the agitation, so far as the prophet of Florence is concerned. But his holiness has determined to proceed cautiously; and accord-

ingly, in pursuance of the Dominican bishop's advice before mentioned, Fra Ludovico arrives in Florence, and seeks the cell of Savonarola.

Kindly the submissive monk receives the pontiff's messenger, becomes his host, and for three days listens to his arguments; but remains unconvinced. As the crowning proof, the cardinalate is proffered. 'Come,' said Savonarola, 'to my sermon to-morrow morning, and you shall hear my answer.'

Thus invited, the guest attends the church at the time appointed. What is his wonder when, instead of any intimation whereby he might suppose that the splendid offer of the pope was welcome to the speaker, he heard more violent denunciations than ever fulminated from the pulpit of San Marco? 'No other red hat,' exclaims the preacher, 'will I have than that of martyrdom, coloured with my own blood.'

'Verily,' said Ludovico, 'this is a true servant of God;' and returned to Rome.

CHAPTER X.

SECOND CITATION.

Political changes—Emperor Maximilian—Alexander VI.—An individual Pope fallible—Savonarola sarcastic—Cited a second time to Rome—Papal brief—Savonarola's defensive epistle—Addresses the people by command of the Signory—Increased extravagances at the carnival of 1497—Spiritual dances—Signs and wonders.

It is related, that, when at his first preaching, in the year 1489, under the Damascus roses in the garden of San Marco, the laity became urgent for freer access; Savonarola, one Sunday evening, in answer to repeated applications, directed his audience to pray until the next for direction from Heaven, when they would know what ought to be done. On the following Sunday, they demanded the response. 'It is,' replied Savonarola, 'the will of God that I should for the future expound in the Church, and that I shall continue to do so for eight years.'

Seven of these eight years have now almost passed, and much anxiety is naturally felt for the verification of this prediction. The aspects of things have already suffered considerable alteration. Till the beginning of the year 1496, the respectability of the popular party in Florence had increased, and had, as it ap-

pears, attained its highest point, when Francesco Valori was named Gonfaloniere for the months of January and February in this year. Among the institutions and regulations which were made at this period for the security of the republic from without, as for the strengthening of it within, a law was made, according to which, all young men of twenty-four years of age should be admitted to the Great Council, while formerly the requisite age was fixed at thirty years. They hoped thus, by the greater number of members, to meet in the best manner all the party divisions against the interest of the Great Council. But the result showed how much they had miscalculated. Long ago, in particular, a large proportion of the young men had already come forward in open hostility to the adherents of Savonarola, more from opposition to their moral severity than their political principles. By this law, the young men had now the fullest opportunity of thwarting the spiritual reforms, by which they had been so much annoyed. Bernardo del Nero, a decided adherent of the Medicean party, was consequently named to succeed Francesco Valori, as Gonfaloniere, and ever after there also remained to this party so decided an influence in the Great Council, that the most zealous of them began privately to cherish hopes of bringing back Pietro de' Medici to Florence.

Meanwhile, the Emperor Maximilian, induced by Ludovico Sforza of Milan, in secret collusion with Venice, had passed the Alps, to form commercial relations in Upper Italy, and to draw the lesser princes, as well as Florence, from their alliance with France. As soon as the latter had heard of the arrival of the Emperor, orders were immediately given for making of the haven of Livorno, in spite of all impediments, and the continued war with Pisa, since they were determined, as much from distrust of

Milan and Venice, as in consequence of Savonarola's warnings, to remain true to the alliance with France. From Pisa, whither the Emperor had gone as feudal lord, there came ambassadors to Florence with the royal intimation, that they should lay aside their mutual enmities until the matter was brought before the proper tribunal, where it would be decided with the greatest justice. Though Florence was in such difficulties, standing by itself against so many enemies, yet the answer given to the Emperor signified that they would only concede his former demands, on condition that the city should be re-instated in its rightful possessions, which they might confidently expect from the Emperor's justice. He, on the other hand, had reckoned on unconditional submission to his decision, and determined thereon to exert force of arms, and attack Livorno by land and water. Although they had little to fear from the Emperor's scanty military powers, this was nevertheless occasion enough for the enemies of the ruling party to publish the most unfavourable and exciting rumours, as at the same time a great dearness prevailed, and the desired supplies from France were longer in arriving than they expected. Of the latter circumstance, advantage was taken to prejudice public opinion against Savonarola, who, it was now clear, said his enemies, had beguiled the people. At last there came some French vessels, which, besides provisions, brought a supply of men; and, with a favourable wind, which held back the Imperial ships from preventing them, ran into the harbour of Livorno. The news of this was heard with joy in Florence. They saw therein at once a sign of Divine aid, when all human support failed, and at the same a confirmation of Savonarola's sayings, which before they had been taught to suspect. During these anxieties, he had indeed consoled the people with great promises; but the joy

was still further increased, when a violent storm so injured his ships, that the Emperor was compelled to break up the blockade.

In spite of persecution and opposition, and notwithstanding his recent illness, Savonarola was now in the flower of his activity. Not only had his attractive eloquence procured for him a crowd of admiring hearers, but he had scattered abroad the genuine and vigorous seed of everlasting life; and thereby exerted such influence, that its effects are almost incredible. But they are well attested by contemporary witnesses, and acquire, besides, probability from the nature and character of the eloquence itself. Words have an incalculable power, and such words as his, so full of confidence, uttered without dread or doubt, had a vital and generative energy, and fell on the undisciplined mind, like dew on thirsty and arid land, which eagerly sucks in the heaven-descended blessing. His contemporary, Nardi, says wisely, 'The severe times which Italy then suffered, inclined men to faith; and the monstrous crimes that prevailed, especially in the Court of Rome, formed the best commentary on the prophecies of Savonarola. This was the reason why his fame from day to day increased. Many foreigners and illustrious persons came from afar, either to hear or see him, partly from devotion, partly from curiosity. . . The consequences of his preaching were extraordinary, and the hearers were affected according to their different mental conditions. Ordinances and laws were made for restraining vice and promoting morals, so that at his suggestion, men in Florence then lived, whether from the fear of God or of the laws, like Christians indeed, if compared with earlier times, or those that next succeeded.'

That there was much that must be declared unconscious superstition mixed up with this religious

movement is to be regretted; yet it was unavoidable, since the purification of mankind can only proceed by degrees, and both the teachers and the taught have equally to free themselves from the fetters that have been forged for ages. If Numa had his nymph in the Egerian grotto, in like manner it was thought by some of the people of Florence, that Savonarola was visited in his cell by an angel or spirit, from whom he learned the wonderful things in which he instructed them. When accused by his enemies of having maintained secret consultations with such a mysterious visitant, he jestingly replied, 'that they might have the door watched, and so satisfy themselves.' It was in a similar manner that he answered doubts as to his prophetic character, alleging that he never asserted it—but that if he had done so, he should have been warranted, since his predictions had been verified, and there was and could be no law to prohibit the profession of prophecy. If, also, he were justly charged with censuring the clergy, from the meanest to the greatest indiscriminately, he might justify himself by the example of St. Paul, who had publicly censured the Apostle Peter himself, and by the judgement both of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. If, again, he had painted the corruption of Rome in strong colours, he referred the objectors to the early popes, in whose rude courts better breeding and manners prevailed, than in the more polished ones of modern times, and when the pontiffs lived simply, and bestowed the superflux on the poor.

The miscarriage of Ludovico's mission not a little disturbed the mind of Alexander VI. He even seems to have caught a glimpse of the eminent virtue of the man, who had rejected with scorn the splendid bribe for which others had risked the greatest dangers, and even dared the most monstrous crimes. 'Yes,' said the Pope to Ludovico, 'he must be a true

servant of God. Nothing of good or evil that man may do, can move him from the position wherein he has confirmed himself. Let him be!'

Ere long, news arrived in Rome, that Savonarola had been expounding Psalm lxxx., in a discourse which exceeded all his former sermons in giving offence, as it contained much vehement and biting sarcasm, a weapon with which he had not yet assailed the clergy and Pope of Rome. Nay, he had frequently before publicly expressed a hope, that the Pope would disregard the misrepresentations of his enemies, and not prohibit him from preaching. Yet he had always added, that if such an injunction should be laid on him, he would rather consult its meaning, than obey its words. For he must needs assume that the Pope had been falsely informed, and misled by others, if he gave judgement counter to the true state of affairs. 'Therefore,' he proclaimed frequently and emphatically, 'if the commands of superiors contend with the Divine decrees, no one is bound by the latter to observe the former—nay, in that case, the observance would be sin. Should the Church command anything against the law of love, then say I—Thou art not the Roman Church, nor a shepherd of the same, but a man, and dost err!'

We have already seen Savonarola asserting his own infallibility against that of the Pope. He now advances a step further. While retaining it for himself, he is prepared to deny it to the temporary holder of Saint Peter's chair. The combat thickens; in a word, Savonarola is now compelled to discriminate strongly between the Roman Church and the person who may represent it.

Accordingly, even while declaring that he had written no evil of the person of the Pope, he zealously exclaims, 'Write to Rome, that the Pope can help the Church, if he but will to do so. Even in this way

let him, by his good example, admonish her to betake herself to penitence. If he ask thee—*What says he of my life?*—answer—Nothing! *Knows he of it?* Verily, right well! Tell him, that he should so influence men by example and precept, that they may be converted. If that is impossible—there is no other safe way. That is what we have to say to the Pope!'

Savonarola was now advancing rapidly towards a conclusion, fatal, if admitted, to the claims of the present Pope—no other than that laid down by Augustine, and repeated by Wickliff in these words: 'No one in mortal sin hath a true dominion over any of the creatures, *apud Deum*, in the sight of God—but deserves to be called a tyrant, thief, or robber, although by reason of human law he retain the name of a king, a prince, or a lord.' Savonarola was not ignorant, neither are we, of the life led by Alexander VI.—there could be no question in his mind, and can be none in ours, whether he were living in mortal sin. By this, his right to power was virtually forfeited—whether it should be actually, was a matter of expediency, the determination of which must be left to Providence in the disposition of events, and the inter-action of moral forces. This forfeiture Savonarola was now declaring. The combat thickens still more. What chance has the servant of Christ with Satan, incarnate on the throne of Christ?

About the middle of October, 1496, Savonarola received a second Citation from Rome, wherein indeed he was apparently treated with even greater forbearance than in the first; nevertheless, it contained the long-expected Decree that suspended him from preaching. 'Already,' thus ran the document—'had the Pope early expressed his displeasnre at the commotion in Florence, which was principally occasioned by Savonarola's constantly preaching against vices,

predicting the future, and maintaining that his knowledge came by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He should have considered, that such doctrines fitted very different temporal circumstances, and led to dissensions, even where perfect peace reigned. Consequently, he was invited to Rome for maturer discussion, that he might justify himself in many points, the burthen of which lay upon him. The Pope, accordingly, had with joy understood from his letters that he, as beseemed a good Christian, submitted himself in all things to the usages of the Roman Church; in order, however, that so weighty a matter might not be idly conducted, he had resolved once more to write to him, and command him, by the force of his holy obedience, to suspend henceforth, publicly and privately, all preaching, till he could securely, conveniently, and decently appear in Rome; on which the contents of the accompanying Brief, with all clauses, should be again withdrawn.'

Such was the citation: the Brief which came with it was addressed to the prior and convent of San Marco, and couched in a very different tone, as the following version of it will show.

'His holiness has understood, that a certain Hieronymus Savonarola, lately of Ferrara, had found pleasure in destructive doctrines, and from the altered circumstances of Italy, had wandered so far, that he, without all ecclesiastical confirmation, and against all canonical ordinances, publicly gave forth, that he was sent from God, and had communication with Him—yea, had published the blasphemous declaration, that Christ and God themselves erred, if he spake untruth. By long indulgence the Pope had hoped he would have been induced to inspection, and have retracted his rebellious words, even would have shown himself humbled and dependent, for that through craftiness he had compassed the separation

of his cloister from the Lombard superiors. But all hope has been disappointed, since not only has he disobeyed the written summons to appear in Rome, but has daily given great offence, both by speech and writing. Forasmuch, henceforth, the general vicar of the Lombard congregation of his Order was authorized to inquire into and decide the matter. But Savonarola is meanwhile to withdraw himself from preaching. Moreover, the remaining brethren of the cloister of San Marco, at Florence, are admonished to incorporate themselves again with the Lombard congregation. Domenico da Pescia, Thomas Bussino, and Silvester of Florence, on the other hand, shall leave the cloister, and betake themselves to Bologna. All this,—under threatening of excommunication in case of disobedience.'

Such was the brief, affecting not only the person of Savonarola, but rendering nugatory the scarcely instituted reform of his cloister, and stifling again the kernel of the seed of a new life, under the negligent discipline of the general congregation. In a long letter to the Pope, therefore, Savonarola sought in the first place, most of all, convincingly to prove the injustice of the accusations raised against him, as also the inadmissibility of the consequences deduced from them. Against the accusation that he was devoted to new destructive doctrines, he remarks that it was universally and publicly known, that he preached only the Holy Scriptures and the fathers. Besides, he had declared often, that he submitted himself in everything to the holy Roman Catholic Church. But to predict future things, was neither a new doctrine nor forbidden in the Church, so far as it offended not against faith and good morals. Further, the declaration was false, that he was induced thereto by the change of things in Italy—since he had preached this longer than five—nay, even ten years. He had never

said that he was sent by God, and spake with God, as all who heard him could witness. Moreover, even this was not punishable or forbidden, even if he had said it, for no one would be so foolish as to publish such a prohibition, since God can speak with whom He will. But in the proposition, if he lied Christ also lied, there was nothing at all blasphemous, since he had never spoken it unconditionally, but only to the establishment of a Christian truth. It was false that he had said, that not to believe his declaration was a sin—what he had said was, that a stiff-necked rejection of that which he had announced, according to a superior assurance, was a proof of a disposition of a mind not in a state of grace. It was utterly incapable of proof, that he gave himself out for a prophet, since he himself had often declared the contrary. Besides, there was no law, and could be none given, which should condemn him who dared to prophesy the future from a higher impulse—so that he did not lead the people astray, under this mask, to what was bad and to heresy. As to the separation of the cloister of San Marco, this was not asked for by *some* brothers only (who, besides, were very unjustly described as bad men, since they had the best character in the whole city), but was demanded by *all*, for the purpose of living according to stricter rule. Besides, the separation was not obtained by craft, but after long and open negotiations. But, even if the charge was made against him, that he had not appeared in Rome according to summons, he had in a former letter given the reasons, which are here repeated, that it was impossible. He must, therefore, suppose that his enemies had concealed that letter. At the same time, Savonarola complains that the investigation and decision of the matter had been given over to the general-vicar of the Lombard congregation; for notoriously, since that separation, very violent contests

had arisen between both parties, when the general-vicar had shown himself particularly hostile. But to appoint an enemy for the judge of any one, was against all Divine and human rights. Finally, as to the re-incorporation of the Lombard congregation, the object could only be to improve the former. But this was impossible in such a way, since in San Marco they lived according to a much stricter rule than in others—from whence more inconveniences would arise. As everything, therefore; they had told his holiness was proved false, he must believe that the order given cannot be observed, and that the effect should cease when the causes were removed. He hopes, therefore, for the revocation of the Decree. Moreover, the Pope might send one of his faithful men for the investigation, or state particularly what he wished retracted.

By all this, Savonarola believed that he had done enough, and hoped the Pope would, after viewing the true state of affairs, decide suitably to the dignity and justice of the apostolical seat. But to justify particularly the public opinion, in relation to the re-incorporation of San Marco with the Lombard congregation, and to avoid as much as possible all calumnies, he published at the same time a separate writing of vindication—wherein he sought to prove on clear grounds, that such a re-incorporation was not only unreasonable, unprofitable, and even prejudicial, but wholly impossible, according to the constitution of the order, and the nature of the case. Neither the brotherhood of San Marco, nor of the Lombard congregation, could benefit thereby. On the contrary, the separation had proved very advantageous to the first, which had increased both in number and in discipline; but by the re-incorporation it would be hindered in the observance of its strict rule, without being able to influence the rest in their lives. To

enable them to do this, a decided credit and spiritual preponderance would be wanted, before the others would submit to it with love and reverence. This, however, could be scarcely conceded to the, for the most part, younger brothers of San Marco—while those opposed to them would be little pleased with such influence. It appeared, therefore, that a disturbance of the peace that now existed, with many corrupt consequences, would succeed the granting of the proposed re-incorporation.

Having dispatched his vindication to Rome, Savonarola would willingly have retired from the pulpit, at least for a season, but the Signory directing him to deliver a discourse to the people, his intention was so far overruled. 'I come,' he declared, 'to warn you again to repentance, though we say nothing more, but shall let God's justice rule. But to obey the illustrious Signory, I come forth this morning; yet I will not preach, but say a few words to the wicked, who maintain,—now know we certainly that we have been beguiled. Let us see if you are as sure of your cause as I am of mine. I am certain that the truth I have preached to you comes from heaven, and that it is sure and undeceptive. Trust me that I see where I am, and that I should now be humanly offending against standard rules, if I were not certain of the truth. But with God's affairs one must not jest. Thou, Florence, sayest, We are certain—I say to thee, that I am certain thou wilt end ill if thou changest not. I have said it to thee—now look thou to it. I will remain in my cell, and fear nothing.' And further, with increasing vehemence, 'Were the power given to me with which the Lord said to the accusers of the adultress—He who is without sin amongst you, let him throw the first stone at her—had I the power of look from which all must withdraw themselves one after another, who had a bad

conscience—how few would remain here!' Had I the power to say, He who in the magistracy has God and the general good before his eyes, without regard of person and the people's favour, let him remain here—how few would remain! And if I with this power could say—He who never practises unchastity or shameful vices, let him remain, and the rest withdraw—how many would go, and how few remain!'

The ensuing Advent and Lent (that is, from Nov. 27, 1496, till Easter 1497), Savonarola preached as usual in the chief church. His subject was the prophet Ezekiel; but these sermons, as the editor himself remarks, are greatly abridged in the taking down, so that they scarcely give an adequate representation. In single passages, however, even here Savonarola's meaning and spirit is not to be mistaken. Still his advice is peace, and the forgiveness of all former injury — with the punishment of unchastity, of gaming, and other open vices. Still he vehemently denounces the unbridled life of the clergy, who sinned from wickedness, while the people so lived only from ignorance, and by reason of their example. But on one point he goes further than ever he went before. 'There have been,' says he, 'many bad popes, and Boniface VIII. was a dealer in the black art!'

Now, too, Savonarola took a more decided part in the proceedings which Domenico da Pescia had instituted at the carnival of last year. The master felt himself pledged to the act of the disciple. Again, therefore, a large scaffold was erected in the market-place, a vast number of the finest specimens in painting and sculpture, offensive from their nudities, were collected; the pictures placed on the first step; the sculptures, especially when portraits of first-rate Florentine belles, disposed on the second; the whole inclosed by foreign precious tapestry; and that, with

great solemnity, set on fire. The scaffolding of this year excelled the first in magnificence; its gorgeous apparel invested the busts of the most celebrated beauties of former years; those of the Bencina, Lena Morella, Bina and Maria de' Lenzi, works of the most eminent sculptors; on it was placed a copy of Petrarca, decorated with gold, missal-painting, and miniatures, estimated at fifty scudi d'oro; and to prevent theft, the whole was constantly guarded. The procession approached, surrounded the scaffold, and amid a concert of consecrating hymns, bells, trumpets, cymbals, and the acclamations of the Signory and the people, the victims, sprinkled with holy water, were delivered to the flames by the torches of the guards. Such was the epidemic influence of this enthusiasm, that even artists, the gentle Fra Bartolomeo, Lorenzo di Credi, and many more, caught the infection, and contributed to the sacrifice.

The excitement attending such exhibitions now rose to an unparalleled height. The poetic life that Savonarola had commenced in the garden of San Marco, he evidently wished to see brought forth into the public streets; and to substitute all profane celebrations by religious ones, he desired to inscribe on the meanest things, Holiness to the Lord. He called, therefore, frequent meetings of the people, and encouraged at them what he denominated spiritual dances, accompanied with hymns, chiefly composed by Girolamo Benivieni, one of his disciples. The Piagnoni would rush from the churches and the convents to join in these sacred exercises, shouting 'Viva Christo!' leaping and dancing in exultation at the thought of the Messiah's approaching reign, sometimes in a circle composed of a monk and a citizen alternately, singing spiritual songs composed for the occasion. Undeterred by papal censures, men and women of all ranks crowded to receive the sacrament

at the hands of Savonarola, though by so doing they quitted the pale of the Romish Church. Yet these successes were not obtained without vehement opposition; perpetual changes in the municipal government occasioned corresponding variations in the power of the Piagnoni. War threatened from abroad; discontented clamours disturbed the state; famine and disease exasperated the miseries not only of Florence, but of all Italy; so that there was every where a disturbed and timid spirit, equally prone to violence and superstition. Guicciardini, writing of this period, says, 'Astrologers predict great and more frequent alterations, more strange and horrid circumstances than have been seen for many years in any part of the world. In Puglia by night three suns appeared in the midst of the heavens, surrounded by clouds, with terrific thundering and lightning. In Arezzo, during many days, there passed visibly through the air innumerable armed men, upon immense horses, with a fearful uproar of drums and trumpets. In many parts of Italy the statues evidently sweated; monsters were born, and many other things took place, contrary to the course of nature.' Ignorant fanaticism, savage fighting, dishonourable intrigues, detestable licentiousness, characterized the dark age in which Savonarola and his followers groped their way among a thousand obstacles towards the dim and distant light of civil and religious freedom. Much was effected in reviving a sense of religion; but the political tumults in Florence were little short of the horrors of internal war. The Compagnacci ranged the streets ready to snatch at every pretext for a quarrel; and either inflicted summary punishment on their adversaries by their own swords, or dragged them to a hasty and partial tribunal for the semblance of justice. In some obscure quarter resounded the cry of 'Palle, palle!' where the Medici, too few to

be the assailants, were yet too brave to be offended with impunity. The very children assembled at the hour when Savonarola passed from San Marco to preach in San Liperata; and in their baby rage, mocked and threw stones at each other, the Piagnoni raising the accustomed shout, 'Viva Christo!' These infantine warriors drew grave men into their contests. Giuliano Ridolfe, one of the most honourable citizens of Florence, rushed out furiously, on one occasion, from a neighbouring house, into the midst of the rioters, with an axe on his shoulder, shouting, 'Viva Christo!"

CHAPTER XI.

EXCOMMUNICATION.

Savonarola appeals to the princes of the earth for a council of the Church—Ludovico Sforza—Letter to the Pope from the Signory—Machiavelli to a friend.—Conspiracy to restore the Medici—Execution of conspirators—Savonarola insulted while preaching—Riots—Excommunication pronounced—General interest excited.

It is rightly remarked by Savonarola's latest biographer, that 'he had to contend with three enemies, who had now come forth against him in visible opposition—servility, lasciviousness, and crime.' He had declared war on all three: their antagonism was but reaction. The blow he had dealt was mortal, but not immediately so; even while dying they had power to wound, nay, to kill. They were the demons that respectively possessed the popular mind, the Medicean party, and the papal chair. If in the battle he committed some errors, we must recollect that those spiritual influences which had seduced others, left himself not untempted; that he had to contend against them as much in himself as in others. There was a spell cast over Florence, over Italy; by which, while dissipating it, he was surrounded. It required strong virtue to breathe at all in the polluted atmosphere; things good in themselves had been perverted by it. Poetry, which he had so much loved

and had so well practised; art which, in its legitimate uses, he could not but have honoured,—all had been led by infernal agency to pander to the lusts of the flesh, the world, and the devil. Above them all, above all external manifestations,—even Vocal Prayer itself,—he had ever set the mind, the soul, the spirit whence they emanate; and where there was a tendency to substitute the processes and their results for the agent of which rightly they are but ministers, he hastened to condemn it. Should he now forbear, when means had been mistaken altogether for ends, and the salvation of the race of man was not only endangered, but suspended,—while heaven was lamenting and hell rejoicing—Christ absent from his Church, and Satan present in the consecrated place? God forbid!

Of all things most repugnant to the ears of popes had ever been the mention of a Council: such assemblies had maintained their credit with princes and states, for the very reason that the chair of St. Peter was always disinclined to them. They militated against the infamous dogma perpetually propounded, and thus expressed by Bellarmine, that 'it is altogether a matter of necessity for every human creature to be subject to the pontiff,' and that 'though the Catholic faith teaches that every virtue is good and every vice evil, yet if the pope should fall into error by commanding vices or prohibiting virtues, that then the Church would be bound to believe that vices were good and virtues evil, unless she wished to sin against conscience; for the Church is bound in doubtful things to acquiesce in the judgement of the pope, and to do what he commands, and not to do what he prohibits; and lest by chance she should sin against conscience, she is bound to believe good what he commands, and bad what he prohibits.' Now of all popes whatever, Alexander VI. had most need of such a dogma for

his defence, and was the least prepared to meet an assembly of the Church. Princes, in their contests with the papal see, were desirous of the corroboration of spiritual authority, and a council was just the sort of ally that they required. Such was the dread felt of a council in the court of Rome, that the mere apprehension of it, on a subsequent occasion, had the effect of reducing the price of all vendible offices; and at the time of which we are writing, it would doubtless have shaken the state of things altogether, and given a very different hue to the history of succeeding periods. Clear enough it is, that Alexander VI. wished to get rid of the thought that there existed such a living adversary and invincible witness as Savonarola; but Savonarola had ventured on a step which precluded all compromise. Foreseeing that the court of Rome and the corrupt clergy would never undertake their own reformation, he felt driven to the adoption of the only means by which the nobler and abler sons of the Church, since the beginning of the century, had seen the only chance of deliverance—an appeal to the assembly of a free Christian council—that the business might be laid to the heart of the principal princes of Christendom, as the protectors and supporters of the Church. Accordingly, in the beginning of the year 1497, Savonarola wrote letters to the kings of Spain, France, Hungary, England, and the emperor of Germany, wherein he lamented the necessities of the Church, and invoked them, in the name of God, not to neglect their duty as Christian princes. Fortunately two of these letters are extant, one to the emperor and the other to the king of Spain, both involving the reasons why the matter between him and the pope had become now an affair of life and death.

'We have' (so run these important epistles) 'the gracious promise of God from old time, that 'he will

do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets' (Amos iii. 6). But now God has in our time resolved to exercise mercy and justice on the earth, in that He will punish the sins and abominations which reign in his Church, drive out from her courts her polluted servants, restore the bride of Christ to her ancient beauty, and convert the unbelieving to the one right faith. Albeit, kings and princes, ye build externally the Church, and make good laws; yet what avails it if within there are those who corrupt every thing, and even spurn her wholesomest ordinances? The fall of that which is built on the ground must be so much the greater when the ground itself is undermined. But God has announced among others this mercy to me, his unprofitable servant, that he will renew his Church by many trials; and I have therefore for eight years, in the heart of Italy, loudly called all to repentance, and have laboured to set forth the Christian faith in the fulness of its glory. Therefore I have now come into many dangers and difficulties, which increase daily; but they are sweet to me through the love of Christ; for I know that this is nothing new, but that ever since the days of the Apostles, all who wish to live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. I have called; repent ye, that the whole world, that all peoples might return to God. But now that the time of vengeance is near, the Lord has commanded me to cry more fervently, that I may declare in what danger the Church is placed by the sins of the people and the negligence of princes, on whom above all lies the obligation of not forbearing those who lay waste the vineyard of God. For it is commanded to all to be zealous for the cause of the Lord, but to princes in particular, who, by leaving these abuses unpunished, and acting as if they saw them not, bring a heavy judgment on themselves; since they thus them-

selves cherish and favour the sin, and make it ripe for destruction, as we now see it in the case of the Romish Church, in which there is nothing sound from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. And yet ye sit quiet, and adore the abomination and disease which is enthroned on the lofty seat of St. Peter, and thence shamelessly spreads itself everywhere. But God, who abhors this thing, has already scourged the Church, and left it to be without true shepherds and leaders, and now wills that all should come to the light. Know, then, I most emphatically give you assurance, by the authority of the word of the Lord, that *this Alexander the Sixth is* NO POPE, and cannot be recognized as pope, not only because he has bought the papal chair with scandalous simony, not only on account of his many public vices, but on account of his secret scandalous actions, which at fitting time and place we will bring to light. Yes, I say to you that he is no Christian, and believes in no Almighty God. Therefore, ye princes and kings, ye defenders of the Christian state, I adjure you, that setting aside all secondary views and private disputes, ye cause a great Council to be held, at any fitting place, that Christianity may be freed from such a plague and such an offence; and I offer myself not only to represent the matter before the holy council with unanswerable proofs, but also no ways doubt that God will confirm with miracles what is undertaken to his honour. So now despise not the command of God, but put on the armour of Christ, that when ye have first overcome the worst enemy of the Lord, who is in the Church itself, ye may the easier conquer the unbelievers who are without; which victory God will certainly give you, as the reward of your endeavours. The Lord Jesus Christ grant you his spiritual mercy and eternal happiness!'

Such was his appeal; it was a serious step, nor

waited long for its answer. Among all the enemies of Savonarola none was more bitter than Ludovico Sforza. As an instance of his enmity, this man once wrote to Savonarola, that 'his views regarding Pisa were as good as frustrated.' Savonarola had by his political principles and influence on the people, prevented Giovanni Pier Francesco de' Medici, to whom Sforza had given his sister, the princess of Imola and Forli, to wife, from obtaining, in spite of his powerful adherents, any important influence in Florence; besides, whilst poets and orators compared Ludovico with the gods, Savonarola had in prophetic spirit said to him, 'The hens will come and eat up the fox.' Ludovico, who burned with rage and fury, at first treated with assassins to remove Savonarola, and then spread rumours among the Franciscans to undermine his importance among the people, but in vain. At last his spies, of whom he kept many on the boundaries for observation of the neighbouring states, succeeded in getting possession of one of the letters that Savonarola had written to the different courts. When Ludovico saw the contents, it was clear to him that this, if any thing, must prepare destruction for the meddling monk. He sent this letter to his brother, Cardinal Ascanius, who long since had rancorously intrigued against Savonarola, that he might submit the same to the pope. When Ascanius came before Alexander VI. he broke into a loud cry, and said, 'We have set upon thee the triple crown, that thou mightest defend the Church; but days will come when thou shalt be able to find no rescue, and when thou wilt stand in danger of losing thy crown—we, our hats.' The pontiff, quite perplexed, replied, 'How? What words are these? What dost thou mean?' The cardinal then immediately drew forth from his bosom the letter, and gave it into the hands of his holiness. He read it, and conceived a more than deadly hate against the writer.

But Alexander VI., a master in dissimulation, and especially skilled in making pretence of virtue and holy aims when he wished to carry out any wicked deed, conducted his proceedings against Savonarola, as if he was doing all for the sake of God's honour. Even before this had a certain Pietro Clerichino,—a deserter from the congregation of San Marco, who quickly rose to great dignity in Rome, became doctor of theology, and procurator of the Dominican order,—given to the pope the advice, that he should deliver over to the Tuscan brotherhood twelve cloisters, out of the Roman province, under the pretence of wishing to reform them. This it was thought would fire Savonarola, who had laid nothing more to heart than the purity of this body, whose separation he had effected with so much pains. The advice was well considered, for Savonarola set himself against the reception of the papal brief, and all the others with him; at the same time, however, stating the grounds why they could not agree to the union, in a separate writing.

The grounds of which he avails himself deserve consideration, and let us see at once what, according to his views, real reformation was. For undoubtedly the principles which he thus applied in smaller matters, he would even more strongly have insisted upon in greater, had he been permitted to speak in the Christian council, an appeal to which he desired. 'First,' says he, 'a little leaven leavens the whole lump; but here in the cloisters of the Roman province is not a little, but much leaven; and not a reformation, but a deformation would come out of it. Every thing depends on what interpretation one gives to reformation; but now reformation is, both according to the word and the idea of it, the renewing of the form. But the form of any thing is, according to peripatetic principles, something inward, and no one

can pass sentence on reformation who has not recognized the form itself. Moreover, the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; it is as foolishness to him, he cannot understand it. They want to reform the position of the cloister only superficially and in outward things, which is quite nugatory and void, and not worthy the name of a reformation. Or if they wish really to reform it inwardly, then they must have men full of spiritual life and spiritual experience; but these are not there at all, for 'those who are shut up are absent, and the residue are consumed' (Deut. xxxii. 36). It is of no avail to put a new patch on an old garment, or to pour new wine into old bottles. Experience also says that laymen, if they fall into vice, are much more easily converted; monks and clergy, on the contrary, if they have left their first love, scarcely ever return to repentance or spiritual zeal: as also Johannes Cassian excellently says, that 'fleshly and cold men, heathens and people of the world, have come to the spiritual life; but we have never seen that lukewarm and natural men have come to the same." Therefore God also commands by the prophets not to strew the seed of the word in an utterly unfruitful soil, but rather to seek out a new unploughed soil; that is, heathens and men of the world. 'Plough,' said he, 'anew, and sow not among the hedges' (Jer. iv. 3). A reformation will be effected not merely by an outward alteration and augmentation: 'the lives of the apostles,' says Chrysostom, 'and not their miracles, have converted the world.' No wise merchant will enter into partnership with failing or bankrupt men. And truly the servants of God must exert themselves to become wiser in things spiritual than the children of this world are in things worldly, that the Lord may not say of them, 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the righteous.' And if a

superior requires such from us, then we must openly resist him, as Paul did Peter. (Gal. ii. 11.) Also peace, which is the highest aim of every spiritual community, would be quite destroyed by the mixture of so many lukewarm and worldly-minded brothers; for Cain always persecutes Abel—Ishmael, Isaac—Esau, Jacob—the pharisees, Christ and his Apostles.'

Such is the high position taken by Savonarola, the prophet of Florence, against Alexander VI., the pope of Rome. The latter he has convicted not only of error, but crime. He threatens him with further exposure; he tells him to his face, 'Thou art no pope!' And the incarnate Satan has heard him utter this blasphemy against infernal usurpation, and has taken it to his malignant soul to cherish and to foster it for the season of vengeance.

It was a fearful time. The days were full of terror, and the nights of awe. The hours were sandalled with expectation, and winged with wonder. Amazement made the cheek of authority pale. The thunders of Rome were hushed, not silenced. An epistle from Alexander VI. had indeed reached the Signory in Florence, moving them by threatenings and promises, to proceed against Savonarola—'the son of blasphemy,' as he was therein called, and to deliver him into the hands of the Pope. Though for awhile the Reformer of Florence had submitted to an authority which had long been the cement of the ecclesiastical fabric, however unjustly it was now exercised, and relinquished his pulpit to the prior of Fièsole; yet soon his free soul asserted its privilege, and he resumed his functions in defiance of the Pope's mandate. 'It is,' said he, 'the will of God that I shall not submit to the decisions of such a corrupt tribunal; and verily, I shall be condemned of God, if ever I am weak enough to ask absolution for a righteous resistance!' In much of this he acted

under the direction of the Signory, who were compelled, therefore, to vindicate him in order to justify themselves. This they did by means of the following letter, which they sent to Alexander VI.

'Most reverend and blessed Father,

'So soon as Girolamo Savonarola received the messenger with the letters of your holiness, in which he is termed 'the son of blasphemy,' he withdrew from the greater Church, wherein he was instructing the people in religion and morals, into his own monastery, and determined to give way for a time to the falsehoods and calumnies of his detractors, until the wrath of your holiness should cool, and you should be informed by a more sure messenger of the untruth of the accusations brought against him, 'that he disseminated great and pernicious errors, to the peril of the souls of the faithful in Christ, and gave rise to much scandal by his predictions.' Now we can testify of this most excellent labourer in the vineyard of the Lord, that he has gathered from it such fruits as no others have yet gathered in our time. And to add still more, if the saying be true, 'tell ye us the things which will happen hereafter, and we will say, ye are Gods,' we must certainly rank higher than man, one who for eight years has predicted to us many events which were about to happen: never ceasing, meanwhile, to reform and improve our religious practices, and by reading, writing, and preaching, to destroy our evil habits, and lead us to a holier life. Thus continually influenced by zeal for the house of God, he easily excited the enmity of the multitude, 'who love darkness rather than light,' whose false and calumnious suggestions have induced your holiness to believe this man injurious to the Christian religion. These, however, are his fruits in it: he teaches justice to all, exhorts our citizens to upright and fair dealing, detects all at-

tempts against our republic, permits no one to set up for himself rights in opposition to the rights of the State, induces parents to give their children the best education and instruction, to render them worthy of the Christian name, persuades women to lay aside their ornaments, and follow Christ, children to prefer, before all other knowledge, the knowledge of the acts of Christ and of the saints, expels from our society and assemblies all unworthy professors of Christianity. By these deeds he has given offence to many citizens and foreigners, and has been accused of demolishing the walls of Jerusalem: as well that we may perish wandering from the truth, if we lose our leader in religion, as that they may have this occasion for civil war, the only way left them of indulging their own ambition, and injuring us.

'We are sorry that we cannot readily obey the commands of your holiness, lest we should appear to do any thing unworthy of our city, and exhibit our ingratitude to a man who has deserved so well of us. Moreover, the attempt could not be made without popular and great danger, so many are there, and of such high standing, whose affections he has conciliated by his integrity. This, we are sure, your holiness would shrink from, and would not permit us to incur so great risk in executing your commands. It is a grievous thing, indeed, for us to lose the good will of your holiness towards us for these things; since, indeed, a few days ago, we received intelligence of your favourable disposition towards the restoration of our Republic. Now, however, (as they say,) in a moment, we hear that such commands are given as we cannot execute without disgrace.

'It remains then, most blessed father, that we beseech your holiness not utterly to forsake us, but to entertain our cause with the favour with which you have hitherto entertained it, and not to throw

our city into confusion by these commands, and to cause our ruin for the benefit of others. We, in these matters, shall so conduct ourselves, that such as we have always been towards the Church and the Catholic faith, such we shall still be found; letting it appear, at the same time, that we have our own Republic more at heart than the interests of others; and we pray your holiness to be of this mind likewise, so will the advantage and security of the whole of Italy be best consulted. We commend our city and people to the favour of your holiness.—March 4, 1497.'

Four days after the date of the above epistle, the celebrated Machiavelli also wrote a letter to a friend concerning Savonarola. As the testimony of an important contemporary, the reader will not be displeased with a translation.

'In order to give you the complete account of the things concerning Fra Girolamo Savonarola, according to your desire, know (that after the two predicted actions, which I have already detailed to you) he preached on the Sunday of the Carnival, and, in conclusion, invited all his friends to communicate with him on the day of the Carnival in San Marco; adding, that he would pray to God that if the things which he had predicted did not come from God, that God might show him an evident sign of it. This, he did, some say, to unite his party, and make them stronger to defend him, doubting whether the Signory newly created, but not made public, would be opposed to him. The Signory was published the Monday afterwards, of which you must have had full notice. Judging that more than two-thirds would be opposed to him, having sent the Pope a brief which he demanded of him on pain of interdiction, and uncertain at first whether he should obey, he concluded, either by his own counsel, or advised by others, to discontinue to preach in San Liperata, and to go to

San Marco. In the mean time, on the Thursday morning, when the Signory entered, he said, in San Liperata, that to prevent scandal, and to promote the honour of God, he wished to withdraw, and that the men might come to hear him at San Marco, and the women might go to San Lorenzo to Fra Domenico da Pescia. Then our brother being in his house, and having heard with what boldness the other began his sermons, and by whom he was followed, was not a little astonished, because doubting him strongly, and believing that the new Signory might be of considerable prejudice to him, and deliberating that many citizens would remain after his ruin, he began with great fears, by reason of which he did not discourse very effectively, showing his followers to be very good, and his adversaries very wicked, touching all those causes which were to weaken the adverse party, and strengthen his own. Of which things, because I found them at hand, I will make some extracts.

'The text of his first sermon at San Marco was these words, from Exodus: 'The more they oppressed them, the more they were multiplied and increased.' But before he came to the explanation of the words, he demonstrated for what reason he withdrew; asserting, prudence is the right method of action. Afterwards he said, that 'all men have had, and have an end, but different from Christians, whose end is Christ; of other men, both present and past, either one condition or another, according to their sects. Assuming that we are Christians, and that this end is Christ; we then ought, with great prudence and observation of the times, to preserve his honour. And when the age requires that we hazard life for him, let us hazard it; and when it is the time that a man should conceal himself, let him conceal himself, as we read of Christ and St. Paul. And

this, I add, we ought to do, and we have done it, because when it was the time to stand against rage, we did so, as it was on the Ascension day, because then the honour of God and the season required it; when the honour of God required that we should yield to anger, we yielded.' This brief discourse ended, he made two ranks; the one which fought under God, which was himself and his followers, the other under the devil, which was his adversaries; and speaking diffusely, he entered into the explanation of the proposed words of Exodus, and said, that by 'tribulation good men increased in two ways, in spirit and in numbers; in spirit, because in overcoming adversity man united himself more with God, and became stronger as nearer to his agent, as warm water brought near the fire becomes warmer, because it is nearer to its agent. They also increase in numbers, because there are three generations of men, that is to say good, and these are those who follow me; wicked and stubborn, those who are my adversaries. There is another kind of men, of liberal life, devoted to pleasures, neither obstinate in doing ill, nor desirous of doing good, because they do not distinguish one from the other. But as among the good and the latter some dissension really is created, in that contrasts shine the more when placed in opposition, they know the malice of the wicked, and the simplicity of the good. With these they associate, and from those they fly, because every one naturally flies from evil, and voluntarily follows the good; accordingly, the bad are missing in adversity, and the good multiply. Therefore, 'the more they oppressed them, the more they were multiplied and increased.'

'I shall discourse briefly, because the want of room prevents me entering into a long narration: He then said, entering into various discourses, as is his custom, in order to weaken his adversaries the more, and wish-

ing to effect a connexion with the following sermon, that 'our discords might make a tyrant spring up, who would destroy our houses, and ruin our country; and this was not now contrary to what he had formerly said, that Florence would render happy, and rule over Italy: because it would stand a short time, but it would be destroyed.'—And with this he finished his sermon.

'The other morning, while he was explaining Exodus, when he came to that part where it is said, Moses killed an Egyptian, he asserted that the Egyptian was the symbol of bad men, and Moses the preacher who slew him, thereby destroying the vices of bad men; and he said, 'O! ye Egyptians, I wish to stab you;' and he began to condemn your books, your priests, and to treat you worse than dogs. He then added, that he would conclude by giving the Egyptians another severe stroke, and said, that God had told him, that there was a certain man at Florence, who wished to become a tyrant, and had taken ways and means to procure success; and that this tyrant would kill the monks, excommunicate them, and persecute them; in short, he would become an absolute tyrant, and that the laws would be enforced. And he dilated so much on this subject, that people the day after made public suspicion of one, who is as near the tyranny as you are to heaven. But the Signory having, meanwhile, written to the Pope in his favour, and seeing that he need no longer fear his adversaries in Florence, in the first place he tried to unite his party with his detested adversaries, and frighten them with the name of tyrant. When he saw that he was no longer wanted, he changed his tune, made not the least mention of the tyrant or of their wickedness, consoling those who had commenced the union, and animated them all against the Pope, and railed against him and his masses,

saying every thing the most abominable of the one and the other; and, in my opinion, he sides with the times and veils his falsehoods. Now that which is commonly said, that which men neither hope nor fear, to you who are prudent I leave it to judge, because you can judge of it better than I can, since you are acquainted with our dispositions, the quality of the times, and the intention of the Pontiff. This only I pray you, that if it has not appeared a labour to read this letter of mine, that it will not also appear a labour to reply to me, that you may give your opinion of the tendency of the times and people's minds touching our affairs. Farewell.

'Yours,

'Niccolo di Bernardo Machiavelli.'

'Florence, March 8, 1497.'

This letter, though the picture of an opponent, paints the man and his times to the life;—it gives us another instance of the unavoidable antagonism between the spiritual and the worldly man, how incapable the latter is of appreciating, how liable to suspicion, mis-apprehension, and mis-judgment, in all that relates to the former.

To return. On March 6, the Signory wrote a second letter addressed to the Ambassador of Rome, recommending to him earnestly and solicitously the cause of Savonarola, and urging the old topic, that the Pope must have acted from an unacquaintance with the true doctrines, and good influence of the faithful monk. But if the majority of this Signory was disposed in favour of Savonarola, that which immediately followed, when Pietro Alberti was named Gonfaloniere, and many partizans of the Medicean party had attained to the first offices, was even more unfavourably disposed. The unquiet disposition of the citizens, and the distress, from the dearness of

provisions, among the lower classes of the people, were considered by them as advantageous circumstances, and they ventured even to conceive a scheme for reinstating Pietro de' Medici in Florence. The conspiracy was kept so secret, and the plan acted on so quickly, that Pietro would certainly have appeared in Florence by the end of April, 1497, to the general surprise, at dawn of day, in the midst of them; had not a violent rain so long delayed him and his numerous train a few miles from the city, that the news of his arrival had time to get to Florence. The gates were shut, and at least a part of the citizens called under arms. So that the unprepared company were compelled to return without accomplishing their business.

A few months afterwards the conspiracy was discovered, and five of the most distinguished citizens were sentenced to death, without permission of appeal to the great council, which right not long before had been granted by law to all who were charged with political offences. The hatred of the people against the State, could not excuse the open lawlessness of this,—of which the blame has been charged on Savonarola,—who, however, was in no condition to prevent it, since one part of the Signory was decidedly against him, and the other was indifferent.

The Compagnacci now thought it time to come forward, and do all in their power to cover Savonarola with infamy, and in such attempts were neither hindered nor punished by the magistrates. In various ways they sought to prevent his further preaching, on which account, even many friends of Savonarola advised him to abstain from appearing in public. Others, and Savonarola himself, were of a different opinion. But even these were prepared for extremities, and the feast of Ascension, on which Savonarola

would preach in the cathedral, was awaited with anxious expectation. And, indeed, the night before the appointed day, the adversary was not idle. Some of the boldest of Savonarola's enemies, with the help of some scandalous clergy; then entered in darkness the church; and not only covered the pulpit with the skin of an ass lately killed, but laid portions of the flesh around, so that the Church was infected. But early in the morning, when, as usual, the people were assembled in the Church, and observed the detestable insult, all was cleansed before Savonarola with many of his adherents entered. On which occasion he spake to the following effect:—

'How great is the power of faith, beloved of Christ Jesus, the word of our Saviour shows when He says, 'had ye faith even as a grain of mustard seed, if ye spake to this mountain 'be thou removed from hence,' then it would remove, and nothing were impossible to you.' Although this authority might be sufficient for us, we will yet, for the better comprehension of it, show on the grounds of reason that faith is mighty. First: It raises man in spirit and disposition above perishable earthly things to spiritual objects, and into communion with God. It throws him more and more on the power of God, to whom nothing is impossible; also, when united with love, man becomes by it as one with God, like the loving with the beloved. He who therefore has perfect faith, fears less the things of the world, in proportion as he loves God. Therefore, beloved! must we in all our afflictions arm ourselves with this faith; for as I have often warned you, the time of trouble is come, in which it will be shown who has true faith, and who not. Therefore God stirs up great opposition, that they who only feign to believe, may manifest their hypocrisy, and God reveal in them his

power and his righteousness. This morning thought I, that I should go to heaven, but the hope is delayed. Thou, who suspectest that I perhaps have had fears! knowest thou not, that faith fears nothing? He who hath faith, stands where the men of the world cannot reach, where the sword and dagger of the enemy come not. Thou thoughtest I should not ascend this morning the pulpit. Behold I have nevertheless come, and shall always come, as often as God appoints me, unless man should hinder me, for I am resolved to lay down my life for the sheep. Firstly; I thank Thee, O Lord! that Thou hast given to me through natural insight, the assurance of thy being—I thank Thee for the supernatural light of faith, by which I acknowledge that Thou art Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and Thou, Jesus Christ, art true God and man, come in the flesh, and crucified for our salvation. Lord, my God, Thou knowest that I have trusted in Thee, and not in earthly wealth, nor powerful friendship, nor popular favour, not in arms and warlike might, but in Thee alone, and Thy great goodness, in which I will trust for ever. Deliver me out of the hands of the enemies of truth, that is, set my soul free, that it may be full of assurance to make known the truth, that she may not serve lies and wickedness, neither among fawners and flatterers, nor among bravoes and persecutors. They say, O Lord! I am a misleader and betrayer of the people, but Thou knowest that I have not done such unrighteousness. I call all heaven to witness for me, that I announced all things which should come upon Italy, the Church, and this city in particular, not out of mine own mind; but have preached, enlightened by Thee, and at thy command. Lord, Thou art my witness, how false are all the accusations which they have brought against me, that I have

sought to accumulate riches, or honour. Arise, O Lord! and let men know thy law of love, that they may unite themselves in peace.

Now will we speak to the good. Ye believe what I have aforesaid, and know we have to contend against twofold power, human wisdom and wickedness—yet be not troubled if ye see wickedness increase—yea, for it increases in the proportion in which the life of the good is revealed, and the truth is preached; whence by this trouble the elect become better, and the rejected worse, so that we can say with the Revelation, the time is nigh, that he who is godless should remain godless, and he who is impure should remain impure; also he who is honest let him remain honest, and he who is holy let him remain holy. And now I turn myself to the wicked; nevertheless, O Lord, I pray to Thee for them, not to be wroth with them, but if it be possible, convert them to goodness and forgive them, for they are blind and know not what they do. O ye ingrates! hear my words! Ye strive not against this monk, but against Christ, who is a righteous and powerful judge! I am not transgressing against you, because I would resist you; rather I am compelled to lay down my life for the honour of Christ, and for the welfare of souls. I exhort you to concord and peace. But, ye say, thou art the cause of our strife. I answer; the wicked life is the cause! Live well, then you will have peace. Ye seek to hinder my preaching, that ye may live after your own fashion. Do it not, for it will bring you into peril. And if ye say, to-day shalt thou not preach, for thou art forbidden by the Signory; then say I, that it is not true. And even if it were true, the question yet remains, whether I should obey you? Yet not now to enter into this discussion, I say, that I would not preach, if I feared offence. I hear a noise—the wicked will not forbear

their malice. Have yet a little patience—if ye knew, what I know, ye would weep. Ye who are on the better side, fear not; since God is for us, and many thousand angels are here to protect us.'

At this point the sermon was interrupted; the sons of mischief had mingled with the congregation, one of whom, by name Francesco Cei, now threw to the earth a great alms-box which stood in the middle of the church, while he at the same time, with many others, ran away and opened all the doors, that the people in their first fright might quickly abandon the place, and Savonarola might be readily secured. But great as was the noise and disturbance that arose, this nefarious design was nevertheless frustrated, as all the adherents of Savonarola, who had partly armed themselves, gathered round the pulpit. Savonarola sought indeed to quiet the crowd again, but he was obliged to speak the blessing, and was accompanied from the pulpit to San Marco thickly surrounded by his friends. Many seized their arms, and the whole town was in commotion. The Signory feared a disturbance, and took several measures of safety; but permitted the event of the day to pass without even enquiry. Savonarola, however, received from them an intimation to preach no more. Clerical compulsion he had not recognized, but he now subjected himself as a citizen to the law. Some days after he circulated printed letters, to pacify his friends and followers, and to encourage them to further stedfastness in their approaching trouble. He said that 'the Holy Scripture, and also the history of the Church, showed that the latter could only renew itself under persecution, as it was founded under the same. Until now the attempts of the wicked had been frustrated, which had in vain endeavoured to gain his excommunication by calumnies and lies, and even to get him put out of the way; but the Lord would let

no one be tempted above his power, and would strengthen him in increasing trouble. Whatever, therefore, he might attempt, God's work would not fall to the ground; but to those who remained stedfast to the good under persecution, there was prepared a heavenly inheritance, which outweighed every thing earthly. Therefore,' he continues, 'remain quiet, still, prudent, clear, pure, and do well; continue in lively prayers; defend the truth without hatred and bitterness, whilst you expose the folly of the godless: for he who persecutes is miserable, and happy he who suffers persecution.'

Scarcely were these violent proceedings known in Rome, and still worse interpreted by the enemies of Savonarola, when the pope, on the 12th May, 1497, pronounced the excommunication on Savonarola, as one who was disobedient, and suspected of heresy. The following brief was accordingly directed to the brethren of the Franciscan order:—

'Since the pope had often heard by clerical men of spiritual and worldly standing, that Savonarola was spreading destructive doctrines, he had hoped in the beginning that he would turn back from his error. Moreover, that he had not appeared when summoned, to justify himself from the accusations made against him; and had also not refrained from preaching, as he had been ordered. All this had been borne with great leniency, out of regard to the excuse alleged, and in the constant hope that he would return to obedience. But when he continued in his perverseness, the reincorporation of the cloisters of San Marco with the Lombard congregation was demanded, which likewise he would not obey. In order, therefore, to perform what was owing to the welfare of the souls committed to him, according to his duty as a shepherd, he commanded him, under threatening of the like punishment, to announce openly in all churches the excom-

munication of Savonarola, and to attend to the strict observance of the same, and to give to the papal commissary thereto commissioned all required support.'

The brief was entrusted to Giovanni da Camerino, a violent enemy of Savonarola, who, however, was restrained by fear from appearing personally in Florence, and therefore sent it from Sienna. The same was indeed fixed up on the cathedral at San Croce, San Miniato, and some other churches; but the greater number refused to make the same known, because it was not given in the proper form. This occasioned violent contests, and much dispute on the guilt or innocence of Savonarola himself. Laymen and clergymen came forward to his defence; among them Domenico Benevieni, the Minorites Giorgio Benigno, and Paolo da Fucecchio, and the philosopher Giovanni Nasi. But not only at Florence was Savonarola and his cause the subject of the most lively contests; but also in London, Brussels, Lyons, and other places where Florentine merchants came, were the character and conduct of this remarkable monk spoken of in different ways, but with equal interest. Even in Constantinople, where, as Burlamacchi tells us, the contests and speeches of the Florentine merchants and money-changers were so frequent and lively about the affair, as they came from one side or the other, that the sultan himself heard of it, and sent for the Italian consul, to be informed on the subject. The consul gave the sultan, at his own request, one of the writings of Savonarola,—the sermons on Amos and Zechariah,—which the sultan got translated into Turkish for his personal use, that he might have the means of judging on the matter for himself.

CHAPTER XII.

DEFENCE.

Apathy of the Signory.—Controversial papers—Savonarola's reply to the Pope—New Signory—The brothers of San Marco and citizens intercede—Savonarola again preaches in 1498—And writes several letters to the Pope, all in a strain of indignant remonstrance.

THE eight years, predicted by Savonarola, during which he should continue to preach, were now expired; and the faithful ox that had trodden out the corn was muzzled: thus bound, he was delivered up into the hands of the butcher. Such character, and none other, belonged to Alexander VI. He is suspected of having superintended the administration of some slow and subtle, but mortal, substance to the already mentioned Sultan's brother Zizim, before setting him at liberty, according to his contract with Charles VIII., thus 'keeping the word of promise to the ear, and murderously breaking it to the hope,' or, like a 'juggling fiend, paltering with men in a double sense,' and 'damning those that trusted him.' By means of his son, Cæsar Borgia, who, commencing life as a churchman, threw off the habit in 1498, and took the field as Duke Valentino; he contrived to

annihilate the barons of Italy—that Cæsar Borgia, who subsequently murdered his brother and brother-in-law—who, as a virtuoso in lust, and blood, and death, nightly filled the streets of Rome with the corpses of the assassinated, and poisoned by craft those he could not slay by force. But it was written in heaven, that both Alexander VI. and his slaughterous son should themselves suffer in like kind. Purposing to take off by poison the rich Cardinal Corneto, the latter succeeded by bribes, promises, and entreaties, in gaining over the Pope's chief cook, and thus both died of the draught intended for their guest. At the period, however, of which we are writing, both were living; and these facts are only mentioned to show the kind of enemy with whom Savonarola had to deal.

The higher classes in Rome felt assured that the excommunication of Savonarola would be certainly acted on, and his few friends there were consequently afraid to plead in his favour. Gasconades, satirical verses, and scandalous epistles were circulated by his enemies; and night and day the monks of San Marco were disturbed and insulted. Savonarola himself did not publicly appear; and the Signory showed that sort of apathy in the business which gave encouragement to the adversary. The sittings in the Duomo were broken; and, as if from insult, in a few days all the bad customs returned, which had been prohibited by law. The Franciscan and Augustine monks, moreover, refused to take part in the next procession to the honour of St. John, if the brothers of San Marco were permitted to join. Accordingly, all share in the same was forbidden to these, as well as the brothers of San Domenico at Fiesole.

Meanwhile, as already stated, learned and ingenious men were engaged in the defence of Savona-

rola's doctrine and conduct, for truth is never without her witnesses. Savonarola likewise defended himself, and was, in fact, his own best and ablest vindicator. Giovanni Francesco Pico della Mirandola, to whom we are so much indebted for his earliest and fullest biography, also took up the pen in his behalf. 'There is,' says Pico, in his *Apologia pro Savonarola*, 'but *one* unerring and infallible judge, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. Now he has even given to his Church an office of judging, foreseeing with how many contrary opinions and private and open enmity she would have to contend: but she is unerring only in so far as she appeals to Him in all matters which concern the substance, the essence of faith. That the Church may then judge, she must be thankful to the intercession of our high priest: but in all other things, even the universal Church may err, as Innocent III. himself maintains, '*The justice of God grounds itself on truth, which neither deceives nor can be deceived; the judgment of the Church founds itself often on human opinion, which both often deceives and is deceived.*' But if the universal Church is not pronounced freed from the liability of error, how much less popes and councils. It remains, then, that every human judgment is deceptive, so that Cebes the Theban is not far from the truth, when he opines that the *Apate* (deception) hangs about all mortal things. From this it follows, undeniably, that the power of judgement may be in many ways abused; for as Gregory the Great says, 'it is often the case, that when the judge speaks, his life nowise agrees with his office; so that he either condemns the innocent, or even, when bound, sets free the guilty, or generally binds and looses according to the suggestion of his own will; and so the very power of binding and loosing robs itself in that he sentences the souls to die, which yet should not

die, and adjudges them to life, which yet should not live. We are, consequently, to consider all censures and excommunications invalid and powerless which emanate from such a judge, who is himself captive in mortal sin and heresy, or which proceed after a legal appeal, or without previous examination, or which forbear an intolerable error in himself; as for the papal right in other respects, it has a crowd of authorities. It is certainly true, that every magistrate is ordained of God, and that not alone for punishment, but for the willing submission of conscience, (Rom. xiii. 15; Tit. iii. 1.) but even so undeniably, that God must be more obeyed than man (Acts v. 29). And throughout we find the commandment of obedience towards superiors accompanied with the usual maxim, '*Sententia Pastoris, sive justa, sive injusta fuerit, timenda est,*' as its natural and necessary limitation. For we may not obey what anywhere runs counter to a Divine law, and we must take particular care not to interpret the commission of our superiors in such latitude as to respect even their open crimes and sins. If a servant, says Jerome, in his Commentary on Ephesians vi. 5, receives such commands from his lord as would supplant his obedience to God's word, then must he obey the Lord of his spirit, and not him who is only lord of his person. No one, as Thomas Aquinas said, can be bound further to obey another than in those points wherein he is subject to him. Over the processes of the will and the functions of the body no law can extend; the soldier obeys his general in all things that concern the war, the servant his lord in all things that belong to his service. But it is thought that it is not to be presumed or feared that a shepherd would command us any thing against the being and Word of God;—then it is well to remark, that many who are called shepherds are but wolves; for

a true shepherd will not destroy sheep, or abandon them to the wild beasts. Therefore no one is bound by an unjust excommunication; neither before God, nor before the Church, dare he acknowledge or fear it. And this rightly: for, if even, according to civic law, not every disherison of a son need be feared, but only that which has a legal ground; how much less need we to fear for ourselves, when by the unjust decision of a man we lose either the heavenly inheritance, or may be expelled from the bosom of the Church, which is yet a witness and bearer of righteousness? 'One,' says Pope Gelasius, 'is the earthly chair, another the heavenly justice-hall; from the nether tribunal we receive the sentence, from the higher the crown.' In the same manner Augustine decided, that if one who has a just cause is condemned unjustly, compensation ought to be given to him. With especial stringency and emphasis, however, the excellently learned Gerson delivers himself on this subject, in his book, *De excommunicationibus et irregularitatibus.* 'In many cases,' says he, 'it is no contempt of a decree if one even disobeys the commands of the Pope, presuming that he is using his power, in a shameful and scandalous manner, for destruction, and not for edification, seeing that the Apostle says, that power is given to us to repair, and not to destroy. Who doubts that one must withstand the Pope in all such cases as come under observation, and say to him, what doest thou? Also, it is nowise to show contempt for the decree, to challenge worldly help against an unjust excommunication, for that is not right, but force; and, according to the natural law, we repel force with force, that is a right every man possesses. In general, opposition against every uncivil demand of the kind is only to be praised, if one carefully avoid every scandal which can be given to the less in-

formed, but these are sufficiently informed, and yet scandalize themselves; hence are they to be looked on as Pharisees, and not as children of God. Albeit, we must, in behalf of the accused, do every thing in order, if he is wickedly advised, to open the eyes of the Pope; but if mildness and humility have availed nothing, then we must take on manly and valiant ingenuousness. In these cases patience is an ass's patience, and fear a hare's fear.'

According to these general principles Pico now shews, in the second book of his apology, that nothing has been done on the part of the pope which can make his excommunication a valid and binding one. There has been no preceding inquiry; the whole sentence depends on loose reports. The command of the pope, in so far as it relates to the brotherhood of San Marco and its reincorporation with the Lombard congregation, was not only impossible, but prejudicial. On the other hand, on Savonarola's side all that was serviceable, according to ecclesiastical and divine right, for the clear exposition of the matter and rejection of all unjust accusations, had been done to superfluity. He had written back to the pope, and shewn the impracticability as well as the injustice of his demand. He needs no absolution, on account of the invalidity of the excommunication; and yet, notwithstanding he had once declared he should sin in doing so, he had sought absolution from reverence for the apostolical chair. 'The unjust binding will therefore,' as Augustine says, 'be loosed by justice;' and it cannot hurt a man that human ignorance should wish to strike him out of the community of the faithful, if his own bad conscience strikes him not out of the book of the living; as no rational man, let alone a Christian, has been able to believe that such a judgment has emanated from the papal chair, which had not even any probability in its favour. It is

altogether a foolish conjecture that some maintain, that men must withdraw from fellowship with Savonarola because he is excommunicated; for according to the papal right there is no need of that, if any one is unjustly shut out; and he himself on whom such a sentence has fallen need not therefore abstain from his calling. Besides, Christ himself did not give up his acquaintance with the man who was born blind, because the Jewish synagogue thrust him out; but on the contrary, condemned them, as seized with sinful blindness, who here would not see God's work.

Such was Pico's apology for Savonarola, who in the midst of peril continued to evince, not only great fearlessness of character, but singular Christian energy. The cardinal Francesco Piccolomini (afterwards Pope Pius III.) offered to procure him absolution with the pope, if he would effect a payment of five thousand scudi to a creditor of his in Florence; but Savonarola replied, that he could not enough wonder at such an offer, since he had always preached the truth, and therefore neither could nor dared retract. He fortified his followers with the assurance, that the efforts of the wicked themselves must lead to the fulfilment of that renewal of the Church of God which he had predicted; reminding them that he had often told them that great benefits were only paid by great ingratitude, and that he had expected nothing else from Florence for his labour but persecution. Nor was any thing wanting to Rome and his enemies to fill up the measure of their iniquity, than that they should persecute the servants of Christ. On the 8th of May, 1497, accordingly, he wrote to all the chosen of God and true Christians, a letter of consolation, of which the following are the chief contents:—

'As we, most beloved in the Lord, wish to follow our Redeemer, who frequently yielded to the greatest provocations of the pharisees and scribes, so have we

given up preaching so long as it pleases Him. But as we well know that the devil proceeds not from the body, but the soul, and that he has raised these persecutions that he, when the word is dumb, may be the better able to infatuate men, so will I do by writing what for the moment I cannot do by word of mouth, because I am anxious for your welfare. Perhaps this will be the more profitable as it is more general, since even those who cannot hear the word may read the letter.

'I therefore now pray you, most beloved, that you will not let yourselves be perplexed by my troubles and persecutions, but rather rejoice with me, that the Lord has thought us worthy to suffer this for Him and the love of truth. Consider the Holy Scripture, and what has taken place in the Church of God in the last time, and you will find that the Church has always increased under troubles; so that what was in the beginning a small and insignificant community has gradually spread itself, amid great persecution, through the whole world. But when troubles ceased, then visibly it declined in outward and inward strength. As it is now God's intention at this time to renew it, it is also no wonder that persecutions again arise, amid which it will perfect itself in every way.

'Consider also how faithful and merciful God has been to us, how gently He has led us; while He has not brought on us all at once the great persecution, but has, as it were, suckled us in the same by degrees. With his permission, first abandoned men mocked us, then heaped on us abuses; said we were deceivers, hypocrites, heretics; and as nothing of all this held good with us, they put forth all their strength, cunningly to exclude us from the community of the Church; and when they could not get any thing by that, they set on us with threatening words, and devised contrivances against our person. Next they sought to kill us; but we have not yet lost a drop of blood,

for the Lord knows our weakness, and permits us not to be tempted beyond our power; and as trouble gradually increases, He gives us greater strength of faith to bear still greater. And thus He always prepares us for greater troubles, that men, when they perceive that we, amid these persecutions, do not permit ourselves to be seduced by them from the way of truth, may look on our stedfastness, and conclude that we would not endure such if our faith were not true, and there were not a better life than this. Thus will the light spread itself under persecutions, and the contrary of that which the enemies of the cross of Christ wish take place; yes, it will burn the brighter the more its enemies endeavour to extinguish it. Therefore think not that persecutions will destroy or hinder the work of God that has begun; no, it will mightily grow and increase under the same.

'Be not ashamed, most beloved, of the cross of Jesus Christ, but rather exult in it; for if vicious youths vaunt their bad acts, how much rather should we not boast ourselves of our Lord, and that we are persecuted by the members of the devil? Now is the time to win great gifts of mercy; for God's judgment begins always with his elect, whom he tries in many ways, as one tries gold in the fire. The judgment upon the elect is like a fire that separates the dross, and is always attended with compassion; but the judgment upon the rejected will be without compassion. Wonder not that God permits so much misfortune to seize on the poor and oppressed, without rising to vengeance; for truly God's anger cannot be greater than when He lets their accusers accumulate iniquity, and gives them over to be tools of the devil, that the good may be exercised and strengthened the more in true patience. And truly the holy martyrs underwent much greater persecutions and

sufferings than we have; therefore shall we not bewail and lament, or think that God has abandoned us. No; we are rather his children, foreordained to eternal life, which promise all have who suffer persecution for the sake of his love. Therefore let us endure it with all joy, and demonstrate to the men of the world that our inheritance is so great, that every thing in the present life must appear small to us in comparison. Let us arm ourselves against their wickedness with a living faith, with patience in all humility, with perseverance and increasing goodness. Nothing is more calculated to convince our opponents of the truth than a blameless life, for when they see this they must at last be ashamed.

'Nor should you be disturbed because the word of God is taken away from you, for this has been, not by human, but divine counsel, that you might clearly see that those cannot be true Christians who, even on the very day whereon the Saviour himself commanded his disciples to preach the Gospel to all creatures, sought to banish the word of God out of the city, opened scandalous places of voluptuousness, and forwarded the whole work of the devil. But do you pray the Almighty God, that He may again please to open mercifully the springs of his word; for when He commands that the mouth of the witnesses shall be opened, and that they shall preach, then will no man be able to withstand Him.

'I pray you, therefore, by the mercy of Jesus Christ, that you, at the approaching festival, prepare yourselves for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, with true contrition, on account of your sins, and purification of your hearts, before the holy Sacrament, that the eternal Father, by the merits and sufferings of our Saviour, may give you the gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which you may not only suffer with patience, but with joy, in these troubles, and obtain the

crown of eternal life. Be peaceable, humble, chaste, pure, full of love, full of compassion, always fervent in prayer, defend the truth without wrath or hate, and thus disclose the folly of perverted men. And in this sweet joyful time, prepare your hearts for the coming of the Holy Ghost; call Him with earnest faith, with longing, that He may, by the gift of discernment, let you see things invisible and eternal; by the gift of wisdom, despise things earthly, which vanish in a moment;—that He, by the gift of counsel, may guide your feet in the path of truth;—that He, by the gift of love, may make you compassionate and full of love to your neighbours, to all unfortunate persons, and still more to sinners, whose lamentable blindness may move you to put up prayers for your enemies to God. Pray to the Holy Ghost, that by the gift of strength, He may prepare you to endure all sufferings from love to Christ; that by the gift of holy fear to God, He may preserve you in the way of life with all humility and subjection; that you may be quiet and joyful in your God, without fearing or asking any thing from the world, knowing that the time soon passes away; and that we, when it is past, will immediately be with God, and enjoy what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and has entered into no man's heart to conceive, but which God has prepared for them that love Him.'

This letter sufficiently testifies to the depths of Savonarola's feelings, and that plenitude of peace which emancipated him from the fear of death. This was also proved about the same time in a remarkable manner. A fearful pestilence raged that year in Florence, and attacked many cloisters. Savonarola, as prior of the cloister of San Marco, took care that the brothers should in great part be dispersed in the country, among the wealthier inhabitants, about fourteen or fifteen together, under an overseer and a

reader, which latter regulated their occupations. Savonarola himself remained in the cloister where the pestilence was, and performed the service with closed doors. Several of his secular friends offered to come into the cloister to assist the brothers personally; he thanked them, but declined it. He read to the invalids the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the prophet Jonas, and the history of Samson, and often consoled and encouraged the absent brethren by letters. Among others he wrote to a brother who was much troubled with fear:—'It is needful that we rely on the Lord, and not on flight from danger. Worldly men have not shewn so much fear as some of our fellows. Once we must die; and it seems to me happy when one dies in such a time as this, for perhaps death will find him at other times in not so good a disposition. Our brothers who have died here have gone with great joy to their home, not otherwise than as to a marriage feast. Stand with manly spirit, so that you may prepare yourselves for death, for God will try us all.'

In the meantime an occurrence had happened in Rome, which brought to light, in so fearful a manner, the abominations and the vices that had full sway in the papal court, that it could not but withdraw for a time attention from Florentine affairs. Verily, Alexander VI. believed in no living God; he had, as he thought, made an alliance with death and a contract with hell; and yet the lightning of God's judgment was about there to illuminate the night of his guilt, in such a way that even the hoary sinner must shudder at it. Cæsar Borgia had caused his brother, the duke di Gandia, to be murdered and thrown into the river. This was but the beginning of evils by which the unnatural son was to avenge on an unnatural father the wrongs of insulted humanity. Savonarola's friends took advantage of this

pause to send favourable testimonials of his orthodoxy and general conduct to Rome. These efforts, however, only served to ascertain the strength of his party. As to the apologies themselves, they could only conduce to exasperate the power that they sought to propitiate.

All these arguments, it is plain, proceed upon the assumption that Savonarola was in the right, and the Pope in the wrong—that Savonarola was a saint, and the Pope not only a sinner, but, what was unfortunately too true, a most wicked and corrupt man. The Augustinian doctrine of election is pressed in its highest application. Not alone, who are the elect among the faithful—the apostles among the priests—but who have been the Peters among the popes?—and whether the present nominal is indeed a real vicar of Christ, to be obeyed or resisted?—these are the questions—the great important questions, involving the widest and deepest enquiries into the authority of the visible Church and its visible Head, which neither the one nor the other can decide, without assuming her to be what she is not, the Church Triumphant in heaven, under the dominion of the Son of God, instead of the Church Militant on earth, for which still combat the prince of the power of the air, and the Prince of life and peace, until the consummation of the age. Says a modern poet, 'The Church is great, is holy, is ineffably Divine!

> Spiritually seen, and with the eye of faith,
> The body of the Church, lit from within,
> Seems but the luminous phantom of a body:
> The incorporeal spirit is all in all.
> Eternity, *à parte post et ante*,
> So drinks the refuse, thins the material fibre,
> That, lost in ultimate tenuity,
> The actual and the mortal lineaments,
> The Church in time, the meagre, definite, bare,
> Ecclesiastical anatomy,

> The body of this death; translates itself,
> And glory upon glory, swallowing all,
> Makes earth a scarce distinguishable speck
> In universal heaven. Such is the Church
> As seen by faith; but otherwise regarded,
> The body of the Church is searched in vain,
> To find the seat of the soul; for it is nowhere;
> Here are two bishops, but 'tis not in them [1].'

No!—nor in all bishops, nor in the Pope himself, nor in a council or synod, or consistory, nor in the total number of believers, no—nor in any one. Where then? Ask, where Wisdom may be found? or where is the place of Understanding?

> 'The abyss crieth, it is not in me!
> Ocean echoeth back; not in me!
> God marketh out the road to it;
> God knoweth its abiding place!
> But to man He said,
> The fear of the Lord is Wisdom for thee!
> And to avoid evil,
> That is thy Understanding!'

On May 22, Savonarola wrote again to the Pope. Often and largely enough had he defended himself against the revived accusations, without having been seriously heard, nor dared to hope for consideration by a renewal of the subject. He complains bitterly, that only his accusers obtained attention, who misrepresented his words in various ways, in the most shameful manner, since thousands of his hearers could come forward as witnesses of his innocence, and many of his writings were public, and might be referred to in confirmation of his enemies' accusations, if their charges were not calumnies. At the same time, he saw himself obliged to disclose the scandalous conduct of one of them; Fra Mariano da Genezano, who had made no scruple himself to speak in the most violent

[1] Henry Taylor's *Edwin the Fair*.

and rudest manner against the Pope. Savonarola had never forgotten himself so far, and appealed to his latest published writing, *Trionfo della Croce di Christo*, for proof, whether he spread heresy or the doctrine of the Church. But if all human help was forbidden —he would trust God—yet at the same time make known the godless life of his enemies to the whole world, so that they might subsequently be induced to repentance.

First of all, Savonarola wished to meet the whisperings of his enemies among his weaker adherents. In several letters, he encouraged them to continual stedfastness of conviction in a Christian life—and proved the invalidity and open injustice of all objections. In a letter of July 19, 1497, to all Christians and beloved of God; he reminds them in the first place, that truth has at all times been persecuted by the wicked of the world, whereby the fulfilment of the same has been only hastened and confirmed, both under the Old and the New Dispensations. Also in respect to himself, he long before had prophesied, that he must contend against the double power of human wisdom and wickedness. He had also expected for all his labour in Florence nothing but trouble. 'Moreover,' he continues, 'believe, beloved, that this excommunication counts for nothing, either with God or in the Church, since it is obtained by the calumny of such men as are opposed to God and truth. How false their accusations are is matter of public notoriety, since I have neither preached heresy, nor been disobedient to the Church or the Pope. But it is an irrationality to maintain, that in all things we are bound to obey our superiors, in so far as they stand in the place of God; which, however, is not the case as soon as their commands oppose those of God. And as this case has several times happened to me, I have not obeyed, because I knew that neither

God nor the Church willed such an obedience. In particular, as to the union of our cloister with the Lombard, I have proved on sufficient grounds that it is against the honour of God, and the welfare of souls.'

'But if they maintain,' he says, in a second letter to a friend, 'that the sentence of the highest shepherd or judge is always to be feared, whether he be right or wrong, then I refer to the learned and pious Gerson, who declares, that this proposition is not unconditionally true—for it is no contempt of the power of the keys, not to obey the commands of the Pope, when he uses his power scandalously for destruction, and not for edification. If the Pope wished to plunder the treasures of the Church, or to rob the clergy of their rights, no one could then maintain that we must endure that, and not much rather decidedly resist the Pope. Moreover, it is no contempt of the power of the keys, if any one recognizes not an unjustly spoken excommunication, but rather seeks to protect himself against it by earthly power. For it is clear, that such an excommunication is not right, but force; but natural right permits repelling force by force. He who in similar cases follows his conscience, has nothing to fear—if he at the same time uses the prudence to give no offence to the weak, who believe that the Pope is a God, who has all power in heaven and earth—but one should seek, by suitable teaching, to correct such irrationality. But those who can correct themselves, and yet will not—they take offence from wickedness like the pharisees, and not from ignorance like the weak. It is true, that one should take every suitable means to induce the Pope, when he is wrongly informed, to retract or to change the unjust judgement. But if gentle conduct avails nothing, one must persevere with unfearing frankness; so excellently speaks already John Gerson for us.'

The reader will readily remark, that in this extract Savonarola repeats the defence already put in for him by his friend Pico.

Another Latin writing of this time, with the title —'I must not speak, and I cannot be silent,' contains more original and independent matter, and is the more readily quoted, as it is not found in the catalogue of the writings of Savonarola, by Quetif and Burlamacchi, nor, as it appears, was ever printed [1].

'The shepherds, not to call them shamers, let the sheep wander from their way, to go unmolested at their will. But those who remain in the right path, and adhere to their true shepherd, they drive from thence as scabbed. Those who desire better pasture, and have drunken from the brooks of purer water, it is those who have so done, whom they threaten with heavy punishment; and they frighten with wild looks them who mournfully learn their unhappy fate. *Therefore must I not speak.* We see the shepherds, destroyers of the whole herd, keep away the best pastures from the sheep, as already Isaiah prophesied, and the sheep in leanness and consumption perish, or are scattered, to become the prey of the beasts of the field. *Therefore can I not be silent.* The prelates and priests, who might better be called pharisees, to whose hand and will the dignity of the Church is entrusted, persecute with unheard of cruelty the guiltless faithful of the Church. *Therefore must I not speak.* The wise, the lawgivers, are vanished; those lie in the greatest obscurity whom it would have fitted to shine forth. They go along in wide garments and broad

[1] The Latin title is as follows—*Loqui prohibeor, et tacere non possum.* The manuscript itself is found among several smaller writings of Savonarola, at the private library of the late Count Boutourlin at Florence, the use of which was permitted to Meier, by the politeness of the librarian Mr. Sloane.

fringes, who should be the leaders of the procession. *Therefore can I not be silent.*

'The princes and mighty ones, who endeavour to subject all to their decision, threaten not only with words of fear, but torment and torture, all who speak of their scandalous morals. *Therefore must I not speak.* The judges and elders of the people, who should give judgement for the people, sit on seats of destruction, and overturn all order. In short, each judges according to his own will. Self-will counts in place of law, and wickedness overpowers the weak voice of right. *Therefore can I not be silent.* The people live without laws, despising Divine and human right, and run into the meshes of destruction. Besides, spies and calumniators are busy to overthrow the good citizens. *Therefore must I not speak.* The unhappy crowd, who had scarcely left their bad life, return now more greedily to vice, and with frequent invitations proceed in their blindness to destruction. *Therefore can I not be silent.* The brothers, the favourite scholars, who drank from the richest source, who wondering listened to the higher doctrine, who zealously preached and exerted themselves to inculcate truth on men's minds—they now are silent as if sunk into forgetfulness, or deterred by fear. Others look obliquely at the fruits which the former faith has produced. *Therefore must I speak, and speak loudly with the Psalmist:* Praise ye the name of the Lord, all his servants, so praise the Lord, &c.'

For the months of July and August, a Signory more favourable to Savonarola held the reins of government, which as early as the 8th of July dispatched an epistle to the pope, soliciting very earnestly the revocation of the censure. The old devotedness of the city towards the papal chair, the innocence and laudable activity of Savonarola, the

lower interests of the accusing enemies, the desire and welfare of the people,—all were adduced in support of their request; at the same time, their ambassador at Rome was repeatedly urged to second their efforts, by stating who were the chief enemies of Savonarola, and how they might be reached. On the other hand, letters of thanks were already presented to the cardinals of Naples and Perugia, who had devoted themselves to his cause, and endeavoured to obtain for him favour with the pope, while the brothers of San Marco published a paper in defence of the doctrine and preaching of Savonarola; which, subscribed by two hundred and fifty brothers and several hundred citizens, was transmitted to the pope. The crafty Alexander VI. made, too, as if he would withdraw the censure, on condition that Savonarola would appear in Rome to justify his conduct. But Savonarola soon decided that point for himself. On Septuagesima Sunday of the year 1498, he came again openly forward. Even on the first Christmas-day, Savonarola had kept all the three solemn masses of the day in the church of San Marco, and given the communion to his brothers as well as several hundred others. His preaching was again more numerously attended, and it was said that he should preach in the Duomo during the fast. On the other hand, the chapter of the Canonicates, which was called together by the archbishop and vicar, Leonardo de' Medici, had issued a prohibition, declaring that no clergyman should attend Savonarola's discourses; and at the same time, that all priests should enforce the execution of the prohibition on the people, and the effectuality of the excommunication, with its severe consequences; also that no one who visited the sermon at San Marco should be admitted to confession and communion; nor, if he should die, could be buried in consecrated earth. But the Signory which came in since the 1st of

January, 1498, under Giuliano Salviati, was very favourable to Savonarola, and the Lent preachings were restored to him in the Duomo; and it was commanded the vicar to lay down his office, under penalty of contumacy. The raised seats and steps in the Duomo were again replaced, and Savonarola, to the great joy of his adherents, on the 1st day of February entered the pulpit anew. The crowd of people was extraordinary; they thronged the streets to the church as often as he preached, and no one dared attempt to prevent him.

Savonarola was not content unless he might show before all once more the injustice and inefficacy of the proceedings against him; whilst he went through the single points of the papal censure again in the same way as before, and confuted them both by Scripture and reason. Even before this Savonarola had declared, that no one should or dare obey any law against love. In a similar sense he declared in a sermon of 11th February, 'Thou sayest, I should leave off preaching; that will never be, for it is against love. Hast thou not seen that when preaching was discontinued, good life ceased, vices increased and became quite bold; so went to the ground the faith of Christ, and the sheep fell into the jaws of the wolf? Say, what else wanted they with the excommunication, but to remove good life and injure the general welfare? That every child knows. Now that the censure is come, they go into the drinking and gambling places, and lead a perverse life; therefore will I not recognize it, for I cannot act against love. But he who commands any thing against love, is excommunicated by God. To me it is enough if Christ curses me not, but blesses me. Whether wilt thou turn thyself to those who are blessed by the pope, and whose life is a disgrace to Christendom; or to those who are excommunicated by the pope, while

their life brings the fruits of truth, and daily becomes better. Thou answerest not, but Christ speaks, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."' 'That I have not come forward till now,' he says in the following sermon of the 18th February, 1498, 'was on account of the weak; but if thou thinkest that I have prayed for absolution, I reply, that although many have urged me to do it, I have not yet done it. I have indeed erred in other things, because I am a sinful man, but not in thus having preached the truth of Christ; the proof thereof is, that my life has agreed with reason and Holy Writ; also experience speaks for it, since it has brought discipline and morality into the city; and, besides, aimed at the good of the State and the Church. He therefore who prevents my teaching, resists the good and demands the bad; therefore the excommunication is not to be heeded. First of all,' he proceeds further, 'I subject myself as ever, so also now and henceforth, to the holy Romish Church, that thou mayest not believe that I wish to withdraw myself from that which it determines; but, at the same time, I set forth that there is no man that cannot err, the pope not excepted. It were foolish to assert that the pope cannot err, as there have been many bad popes who have erred. Were it true, that popes cannot err, we must do what they have done to be saved. Thou wilt say, The pope can err as man, but not as pope. And I answer, that the pope can err even in such decisions and judgements. How many decrees has one pope given which another has rescinded? and how many opinions of former popes have been contradicted by later? If, in fact, the pope errs, he is not pope, but a man, who can be deceived and err. Thus, as a Christian, I cannot sin; but if I sin, it is not as a Christian, but as a man. In fact the pope can err, and indeed in two ways,—either out of false conviction, or out of

wickedness. But let us leave the last willingly to the judgement of God, and suppose rather that the pope is circumvented or deceived. So will I show thee, that the pope in our affair also is deceived by false persuasion. He, therefore, who would obstinately validate his excommunication, and declares I should not preach this doctrine, speaks against the kingdom of Christ, and for the kingdom of Satan,—is himself a heretic, and excluded from the Christian community.'

Savonarola attacked more unsparingly than ever, at the same time, the depravity of the Romish Church and clergy. 'The scandal begins at Rome, and goes through the whole; they are worse than Turks and Moors. Begin only with Rome, and you will find that they have won all their spiritual benefices by simony. Many seek them for their children and brothers, who enter them with insolence and a thousand sins. Their covetousness is monstrous; they will do any thing for money. Their bells sound avarice,—call to nothing else but money and ease.

'The priests go for money to the choir, the vespers, and their office. They sell the benefices—they sell the sacraments—they traffic with the mass—in short, every thing is done for money. And then they fear excommunication. As soon as evening comes, one goes to gaming, another to concubines. And when they go to a funeral, where they should pray in stillness for the dead, there are great entertainments, there is rich eating and drinking and much gossip, and what scandalous vices do they practise! But they go in the day adorned. They wear fine shirts, and are otherwise richly apparelled. Some know nothing even of the rules of their order, know not what they are, nay, are altogether ignorant. Confession and care of saints are unknown to them. There is no more belief, no more faith, no love, no virtue. Formerly,

the saying was, "If not fair, then fine." Now prudence is not needed, since it has become a shame to live well. 'Look, if a priest or canon lives well, men will make game of him and accuse him of hypocrisy. Now, the word is no more, my nephew, but my son, my daughter. Harlots go publicly to St. Peter, each priest has his concubine; they practise infamy without concealment. This poison has so accumulated at Rome, that France, Germany, and all the world is infected with it: it has gone so far, that one must warn each other against Rome, and it has become a saying, "If you will ruin your son, make him a priest."'

In Rome they heard the news of this with as much astonishment as rage, especially since Savonarola continually asserted that he recognized no respect of persons, but would only obey God. Alexander VI. understood this to mean an intentional doubting of the Pope's right to his dignity. The ambassador of the papal court, Domenico Bonsi, mentioned on the 25th of February the violent ill-will of the Pope to Florence, which endured such proceedings as would not be expected from Turks and Heathens. 'His holiness,' he added, 'was determined someway to make an end of the thing;' and a few days later, in a second writing, he says: 'The Pope is determined to lay Florence under an interdict, unless stronger measures be forthwith taken against Savonarola. For teaching the Gospel he was not to blame, but in defiance of the Apostolical Church he made a jest of the papal commands, and declared the excommunication to be nugatory. The Pope, also, thought there was in the last writing of the Signory, a stamp and impression of Savonarola, which he the more wondered at, as they continually asserted that he engaged not in such matters.' At the same time there went forth a very pressing writing of the

Pope to the Signory, wherein it is summoned expressly, and under threat of interdict, to send Savonarola, the son of perdition, a prisoner to Rome. But the Signory regarded the papal threatening the less, as well as the cry of his enemies, since the period of their office would expire in a few days.

After the elections that took place at the end of February, the Signory which came in on the 1st of March under Pietro Popoleschi reckoned only three members for Savonarola, and six who were violently determined against him. It might, therefore, be seen beforehand what measures it would take. Savonarola wished to anticipate force on the day on which this government began: he mounted the pulpit of the cathedral for the last time. Already, at the last celebration of the carnival several disturbances had occurred. They had taken away the cross from the young people, and broken it into pieces; neither had they shown the accustomed reverence to the Host. 'O, ye priests!' he exclaimed, 'you have gone beyond the heathens in raising such great opposition and persecution to the truth and the cause of God. O, my children! now it is clear that they are worse than Turks; now we must strive against the wicked as martyrs against tyrants. Ye wicked ones! ye strive against this cause, like heathens. Write to Rome, that this monk will contend against you with his cause as against Turks and infidels. There is a brief come from Rome, it is true: therein I am named a son of perdition. Write to them thus, He whom thou so namest says, that he keeps no concubines or catamites. His brothers and all who hear his doctrines look not after such sorry things, but receive the sacraments and live reverently. But as Christ himself, so now we likewise desire somewhat to give place to anger. And, therefore, I say to you, I will no more preach from this pulpit, except when it

is commanded me by those who wish a good life. I will preach in San Marco, but only for the men, and not for the women: this the circumstances require.'

Although the rest of the clergy refused in earnest to absolve, to give the sacrament to, or to bury in consecrated earth, any one who should further attend the preaching of Savonarola, yet not only was the church of San Marco full to overflowing with men, but many got themselves received into the order, whilst others recommenced their wicked life with greater boldness. Savonarola's discourse became sharper in like degree, but without degenerating even yet into passionate violence. In an immovable confidence in the Divine truth, and the final victory of the good cause, he stood powerful and truly great against the always more stormy attacks of his enemies. With reference to the words of his text, he repeated his declaration, that 'since it was come to this point of trouble, the second also would not fail, namely, the destruction of Pharaoh in the sea. Whether it will do so now exactly, is not quite certain, yet not improbable. It will take place sometime or other to a certainty.' It is surprising that Savonarola, who, according to former intimations, had assuredly adopted the convocation of a general council into his plans of reformation, gave no hint of this, even in sermons or writings till now. Perhaps he had convinced himself that in the first place there was little to hope from it, and in the next that the needful elements were to be got in quite another manner. This conjecture has reason on its side; for when Savonarola came to the words, 'and they assembled all the ancients of the children of Israel,' (Exodus iv. 29.) he expressed himself thus,—'That is a capital point, an excellent point, yet I will keep it back awhile; it is not yet time to pour in oil. I say, therefore, merely

this. Tell me, Florence! what is a council? Does no one then know any more what a council is? How comes it that your sons know nothing of it? O! now we can assemble no council. Therein thou art right, but I know not if thou understandest it as I do. A council is an assembly of the Church, *i. e.* of all good abbots, prelates, good and upright men of the Church. But, observe, the Church is there only where the grace of the Holy Spirit is. In the council must reformers stand up who reform all that is bad; there should the bishop be deposed who has practised simony;—in the council should the bad clergy be punished; in the council the good clergy should be protected. But he who will punish the wicked, and favour the good, must himself be freed from all stain: therefore, now, no council can be assembled.'

In Rome anger and fear increased every day. They looked for formal separation—so much the more frequent and threatening became the letters of the pope—while the ambassador must have remembered how they jested away the final recovery of Pisa, of which the pope had previously assured the Florentines: yet they lacked spirit to step forcibly forward against Savonarola. He, on the other hand, on the 13th of March, 1498, sent a final letter to the pope, in which, full of confidence in the highest Judge, he appeals from him, who, as the highest shepherd of the Church, had not defended innocence and the cause of God as he ought, with an earnest warning to his holiness *to think of the salvation of his soul.* 'I thought,' he writes, 'that it was my duty at once to defend the truth of the Catholic doctrine, to the honour of God, and the furtherance of the holy faith, and to attend to the ruined manners, and bring them back to Christian discipline. Afterwards, I saw that many shepherds of the Church, by bad example and cor-

rupt doctrine,' led astray the flocks committed to them, and preceded them, by many scandalous actions, to hell. And while I did this, and by the announcement of coming punishment endeavoured to guide the people back by the right way, then trouble and anguish came upon me, wherein none consoled and helped me: then I hoped your holiness would stand up in my defence, and contend for me against the enemies of the faith—but the contrary has been the case. Since now, your holiness, the repeated vindication of my innocence, and all the grounds brought forward by me, not to the vindication of my wrong, but to the proving of the purity of my doctrine, and the demonstration of my submission to your holiness and to the holy Roman Church, have failed; and your holiness has, it seems, given hearing only to my enemies; I may now believe that in future also I shall not find the help I might have expected with justice from you as a Christian and the highest shepherd. But no power has been given to the devouring wolf to rage against me. Besides, I hope from Him who has chosen the weak of the world to bring the strong to shame, that I shall be heard by Him for the sake of the truth—for which I suffer and bear what I do; and that He will requite those who persecute me, and hinder the work of God, which I endeavour to promote. For, after the example of Christ, I have never sought my own honour, and await death with the greatest desire. *O! would that your holiness would not delay to consider the salvation of your soul.*'

There came anew a threatening letter from the Pope. There was an assembly called of twenty-five citizens from different quarters of the city, which should consult with the college of eighty senators on the business. But the opinions were so divided, that after six hours' controversy they could come to no con-

clusion. At last, on the 17th of March, Giovanni Berlinghieri and Pietro Popoleschi, with their adherents, carried the point, that a threatening command should be sent to Savonarola to preach no more. On the following day, 18th of March, Savonarola appeared in public for the last time. He declared again, in the most solemn manner, the truth of all he had preached, and threatened severe Divine punishments to the Clergy of Rome and Florence. As no more human aid was to be hoped, nothing else remained but to take his refuge with God and Christ. 'As one flies to fire out of tainted air, and drives away this with that, and withdraws from out of the too great heat into the cool dwelling, so must we now take our flight to the last help out of the greatest confusion of spiritual affairs in the kingdom of Christ. From the Pope we must turn to the heavenly Pope—that is, to Christ.' And further on, he declares that he '*never* set himself against the *right true* power of the Church.'

'But if this power of the Church be indeed destructive or ruinous, it is no ecclesiastical, but a HELLISH POWER OF SATAN. I say to you, when they maintain concubines, catamites, and robbers, but persecute the good, and endeavour to hinder the Christian life, it is a DEVILISH POWER WHICH WE MUST RESIST. *I not only submit myself to the ecclesiastical power, but I defend it, the Romish Church and the Christian doctrine,* AGAINST THAT HELLISH POWER OF SATAN. Let the Lord only act; He has been the teacher of all prophets and holy men. This is the Master who handles the hammer, and when He has used it, lays it not to the accomplished labour, but throws it away. So He did to Jeremiah, whom He permitted to be stoned at the end of his preaching—*so will He also do with this hammer, when He has used it after his own way.* Well! let us be content: the Lord do

what pleases Him! The heavier the condition here beneath, the more glorious the crown there above. But now of the wicked have you heard and also not heard—heard, that this preaching, which aimed at the welfare of the state, is suppressed; but not heard for your own welfare: so to those sick men who have frequently driven away the physician, the latter yields the wine they have demanded, and abandons the healing.'

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ORDEAL.

Christian and Man—Controversy between Domenico da Pescia and Francesco di Puglia—Proposal of the Fiery Ordeal—Savonarola's reluctance—At last yields—The ordeal—The cowardice of the Franciscans—The superstition of the Host—Violence—Insurrection—Savonarola's imprisonment—Proofs of the Pope's guilty participation in the infamous trick.

SAVONAROLA has now spoken out, he has uttered excommunication for excommunication. The pope of Florence may ere long become the pope of Rome, if further advances be permitted. The present pope is arraigned for the monster that he is, and summoned before the bar of that Church where no error can have entrance, and into the presence of that Judge who tries the spirits of men. Savonarola feels himself the representative of that Judge, and, as such, infallible; nay, incapable, as a Christian, of error, though not as a man,—a just though nice distinction, and much insisted on by the beloved Disciple in his first Epistle: 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' 'Whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that Wicked One touches him not.' (Compare 1 John i. 8; v. 18.)

Although as a Christian, one almost as perfect as ever illustrated the only divine religion in the world; yet as a man, Savonarola was not without his defects. Though prophetically gifted to see the necessity and certainty of reformation to the Church, still in secular affairs he looked on certain things too much from a temporary and local point of view, and was not yet wholly delivered from all the superstitions against which he protested. His personal chastity, his entire and undoubted celibacy,—while it elevated his character and his affections, yet deprived him of many sympathies, and involved some of the relations of life to him in an obscure mystery, which sharpened his indignation against vices, and exaggerated sins into crimes. This was an evil of which he was unconscious, and imposed upon him by his Church, whose ambitious cruelty in this particular he does not appear to have appreciated. Marriage, had it been permitted to him, would have softened many of his asperities, without quenching his zeal. A more tempered enthusiasm would have preserved him from making enemies of many who might have been his friends, and secured him from much of the peril which he courted, without lessening the value of his demonstration in the great cause in which he was engaged. Nevertheless, we must not forget that it was none other than God who had chosen him for its championship, and that therefore the selection must have been wisely made.

Yet, owing to the circumstance just mentioned and exclusive spiritual contemplations, Savonarola showed too little sympathy with the body and the organs that serve for the channels of the soul. At all times systematically denying it any indulgence, he was willing to surrender it at the shortest notice. He murmured not at being used as God's hammer, and then thrown away. But this state of feeling removed him to too great

a distance from some minds, and rendered him less careful of the impressions made by danger and death on others than policy would have dictated. If it were in his power, he might with advantage to his influence have interposed effectually in behalf of those who were beheaded for the conspiracy to restore the Medici. It is said, that in claiming their right of appeal, they were opposed by the Piagnoni, and especially by Valori, at whose feet the relatives of the unfortunate men threw themselves in the humblest entreaty, his obduracy being ascribed to personal resentment. Public sympathy was moved by the injustice of the case and the venerable age of two of the sufferers; and though Savonarola was not individually implicated, yet either his silence or his impotency was not without an immediate effect, and his credit with the populace was in consequence considerably diminished; a proof this, how much his former authority rested on the just and wholesome influence of elevated character. From that moment the Bigi, who had previously joined his party in preference to that of the Compagnacci, attached themselves to the latter, thereby giving them such a preponderance in the magistracy, as enabled them to make some show of enforcing ecclesiastical penalties; at the same time, though all religious papists, who knew the force of Savonarola's mind and the excellence of his conduct, were naturally anxious to reckon him on their side, yet those who were reproached alike by his life and words, were glad to undermine the influence of so formidable a censor. The Franciscans took this opportunity of indulging the animosity existing between them and the Dominicans, and eagerly stepped forward to second the papal anathemas on one of their rivals. The Minorite, Francesco di Puglia, in particular, protected and applauded by the Compagnacci, attracted congregations almost as numerous and quite

as clamorous as those which attended Savonarola; but we hear nothing of reformation of manners as the result of his preaching.

There was one peculiarity in the theology of Savonarola,—he made little account of miracles among the evidences of religion. A pious life was to him the greatest miracle and the best evidence; other signs than these are demanded only by wicked and adulterous generations. Yet in his letters to the crowned heads of Europe, appealing to a council, he had suggested that miracles would not be wanting. It was evidently a sublime figure thrown in to affect royal imaginations; but it was seized hold of at Rome. By a perversion of the doctrine of miracles, and the manufacture of false ones, she had trafficked with the divine sense of wonder in the soul of man, and traded on the ignorant mind; she therefore employed this Francesco di Puglia to debate the matter. The imprudent, over-zealous Domenico da Pescia was betrayed into the snare. As early as the Lent of 1496, he and Francesca di Puglia, when both preached in Prato, had engaged in the controversy. Francesco seized on the point boldly,—that Savonarola's mission wanted the authority of miracles. He professed to teach truth and to prophesy, and had acquired some credit, not altogether undeserved, thereby; but where were the miracles? He taunted Domenico to show his Master's miracles; he accused him of fearing to appeal to any such evidence, and attributed Savonarola's indifference on the point to the vilest motives. He dared him or his Master to venture on supernatural proof, until Domenico began to think that it was a point of honour to agree to a reciprocal challenge. The Ordeal was proposed; and then abandoned. Meantime, by mutual compromise, instead of that test a public disputation was determined on between both. But when did the partizans

of Rome meet argument fairly? The Minorite neglected to appear, and—probably by command of his superiors—departed in haste.

In the Lent of 1498 they both met again in a similar relation, at Florence. Fra Domenico preached in San Lorenzo, the Minorite in Santa Croce, when the latter again publicly disputed the truth of Savonarola's declarations and those of his adherents, and also defended the validity of the excommunication. The debate became violent, and the declamation loud; both parties warmed in the argument, and the ordeal was again insidiously demanded by the Minorite, and incautiously accepted by Domenico. Savonarola seems to have kept aloof from the contest; but, nevertheless, could not avoid being committed by it. The acts of disciples needs involve the master. He seems still to have continued to express his conviction that the truth of his cause was not in want of supernatural proofs; but still, to the monarchs whom he had made his correspondents, he had conceded their possibility—their probability, if the natural should not suffice. Rome bound him to that; she was determined on her challenge. The cunning harlot had conceived in her mind the game, and would create opportunity for playing it; she had arranged all the moves beforehand, and was sure of the result. At length Savonarola's own mind became excited; it was almost, not altogether, free from superstition. While he denounced superfluous rites, he believed in the sacramental nature of the Church, and some magical power in the sacraments; in particular, he placed great faith in the host, as great as Pope Benedict XIII. when he fled disguised from Avignon, who for his special protection bore upon his breast a little box containing the consecrated element. No doubt was entertained of the validity of such a precaution, so difficult it is to divest the mind of early-received

opinions, however absurd. Savonarola accordingly, on one occasion, appeared with the sacrament in his hand, on the balcony of the church of San Marco, before a great crowd of people, invoking from God a severe proof of his disapprobation and punishment if he had spoken untruth. Such acts of misprision, of course, gave to the Minorites an immense advantage. They would not be appeased without the ordeal of fire; whereupon the case came before the Signory, and Domenico pledged himself to maintain, both by arguments and the ordeal, the truth of the following positions:—

'The Church of God needs renovation; it will be either punished or renewed. Florence likewise will, after the punishment, be renewed and blessed: infidels will be converted to Christ. All this will take place in our days. The lately-issued excommunication against Savonarola ought to count for nothing; they sin not who disregard it.'

Francesco di Puglia, in his reply, declared his 'readiness to stand the ordeal at the request of the Signory, touching the matters in hand, of which many, though not all, required supernatural proof; yet not with Fra Domenico, concerning whom he had nothing to say, but' (as a salvo for his cowardice) 'with Savonarola himself, from whom these contests proceeded' (and who, he had reason to suspect, would not accept the challenge); 'another brother of his order might undergo the trial with Fra Domenico.' One indeed made the offer, but soon withdrew, when Giuliano Rondelli, a simple-minded man, presented himself for the trial. The fanaticism of this individual was extreme, as he had no faith in the ordeal itself, but was willing to die for the pope's honour, provided his opponent might also be burned. So great was his zeal to murder, that he was willing to die in the committal. 'He was,' he said, 'convinced

that he should perish in the fire, but willingly yielded his life, since he was certain the same fate would come upon others, and the people would thus be disabused concerning these men's pretensions; nay, he thought Christian charity required the sacrifice of his life, if he could thereby remove the cause of so much error, and send the heresiarch to hell.'

The barbarous proposition of an ordeal was sure of creating a popular sensation. A turbulent and divided multitude gladly caught at the promise of a spectacle, and the magistrates, some of one party and some of another, were from various motives not disinclined to the trial. Not a few treated the matter with ridicule. It were quite as satisfactory, said they, and much more humane, to immerse the two monks in a tub of water—(for their greater comfort, warm water); and he who came out dry might be considered the conqueror.

How much Savonarola must have lamented this state of things! He, however, personally declined the challenge of Francesco, justifying himself in a writing, dated April 1, 1498. 'The Minorite,' he said, 'had directed the original challenge not to him, but generally to any one who would stand the ordeal. And since the question related principally to the validity of the excommunication, it was, according to his conviction, unnecessary to prove by such means that it was null—a point which had been otherwise proved by reasons that had never been refuted. Nor might so weighty a matter be undertaken for so small a gain to the Church. But he was prepared to stand even this ordeal, if his enemies in Rome would appear at it as witnesses. At the same time, he censures the design of the Minorite to summon him to such a proof, when not one among them had the belief that he would come alive out of the fire. That was avowedly cruelty and murder; because the

brothers of San Marco, for the defence of God's cause, found themselves compelled to accept the challenge;—yes, not only one, or single individuals of them, but all were prepared, in firm reliance on the truth of their cause, to be led out to execution. But should any one think, that if his opponents refused to stand the ordeal, the brothers of San Marco were bound to venture alone; he must then again declare, that they had no need to strengthen by miracles what was unanswerably otherwise proved—namely, the invalidity of the excommunication. Touching the truth of his prophecies, he compelled no one to believe more than appeared reasonable to him—but he *did* warn all to live a Christian life—that alone was the miracle he adduced for the belief in his doctrine, and of all truth that comes from God.'

The wily Minorites were not so to be baffled in their perfidious aim—which was to implicate the brethren of San Marco in a trial in which they themselves had no faith, and which they always meant to avoid. There was a solemn jest concealed in the whole affair—there lay under the monk's sanctimonious mask the wanton's smiling cheek—it was altogether an abominable piece of levity, playing with the lives of pious men, and making a game of a sacred cause. 'Either brother Girolamo,' says Francesco, 'is a holy man, and these things are of God, or they are not. If, however, he were holy, he would have charity, without which none can be a saint, or even a good man. If he had charity, he would never consent that I or others should enter the fire, and be burned for his sake. If he be not holy, he will not hazard the trial, and our side will gain the day.' And thus, by such fiendish sneers, good men are goaded to the adoption of what they loathe.

Savonarola doubtless should have met at once so wicked and senseless a proposition with a bold denial

—but he was misled by a habit of dialectic subtlety, which induced him to argue where he ought to have acted. Besides, he was impelled by various motives —a ferment of fanaticism was abroad, such as no man could control, and the character of his friend and coadjutor Fra Domenico was at stake. True, the thing had been commenced while he himself was disabled by sickness, and many of his disciples were anxious and ardent for the trial. There was no want of champions on either side, especially on that of the Piagnoni—men, women, and children, flocked around San Marco, eager to become candidates for the honour of martyrdom. The sisters of Savonarola, and other noble ladies, offered themselves. Once, while walking in the garden of his monastery, a beautiful child came bringing a note in its own hand-writing, proposing to undergo the ordeal; and lest that should not suffice to procure his wish, the child, prostrating himself on the ground, earnestly pleaded that he might be permitted to enter the fire. Savonarola replied, 'Rise, my son; this thy righteous purpose is very acceptable to God; see that thou continue in this good disposition.' After he had dismissed the boy, he turned to one Placido, who then accompanied him, and said, 'I have received letters from many persons, but none have so comforted me as this, from that child, for whom God be praised!' Besides, Savonarola, though not desiring miracles, was no disbeliever in them; and, indeed, was in the habit of looking for indications of the will of God, in the dispensations of his Providence. Perhaps he recognised in the circumstances of this trial, volunteered by his friend against his own advice, and at a period when incapable of exertion, and corroborated by so much sympathetic fellowship, some leading into a path which he had not dared to choose, but through the dangers of which, since he had not pre-

sumptuously incurred them, he might hope to be miraculously sustained.

The contest, however, for the present, remained with Fra Domenico and Giuliano Rondinelli, to whom afterwards the Dominican Fra Mariano delli Ughi joined himself, according to the legal subscription of March 30. Malatesta Sacromoro, Ruberto di Bernardo Salviati, nay, all the brothers of San Marco, and many of the other adherents of Savonarola, had previously made private offers for undergoing the trial.

On the same March 30, the Signory determined on having the ordeal; and that the brothers of San Marco—for with these had they principally to do—should, in case it ended unfavourably for them, be banished for ever from the Florentine territory, and only be received again on the mature consideration of the magistrates, appointed at some future time; and that this determination should also hold good for the opposite party. But in the protocol of the sitting of April 6, the day before that appointed for the ordeal, the question ceased to relate any more to the Franciscans, but how, as if the result of the affair were already certain, the sentence should be made, and communicated to the brothers of San Marco. 'In case Fra Domenico burns, Savonarola, the author of this doctrine, should quit Florence within three hours, as an offender against the state.'

According to this, it is probable that at an entertainment in the palace, a few days before the fiery ordeal, it was arranged by the chief opponents of Savonarola, that the Franciscans should not go into the fire, though they should force Fra Domenico into it.

Manifestos were prepared for the signature of each party. The following is that signed by Savonarola: as its terms were dictated, they are no evi-

dence of his opinions. The assumption it contains was necessarily included in the fact of the ordeal.

'I, brother Girolamo, of Ferrara, unworthy vicar of the congregation of San Marco, of the Order of Frati predicatori dell' Osservanza, accept the proposition of the brothers, who have subscribed this document, and of all the brothers in San Marco and San Domenico di Fièsole; and I promise to give one, two, three, or four, or ten, as many as shall be required for the work,—that is, entering the fire to establish the truth which I preach; and I trust in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and in his evangelical life, that every one whom I give shall come out untouched, that is, without any hurt; if I doubted this, I would not give them up for fear of being a murderer. In token whereof, I subscribe this with my own hand, to the praise and glory of Almighty God, the salvation of souls, and the preservation of the truth of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who alone does innumerable great and inscrutable acts, to whom be honour and dominion for ever. Amen.'

The day preceding that fixed for the trial was passed by Savonarola and his brethren in prayer and fasting, every brother having received permission to fast three days on bread and water. The appointed time was the Vigil of Palm Sunday (April 7, 1498); in the morning, Savonarola publicly celebrated a solemn mass in the Church of San Marco, in which multitudes communicated at his hands; the remaining time was spent in supplication. The peace of his heart shone out in a countenance full of fervour and animation: having robed himself, he ascended the pulpit with great seriousness, and by a short sermon awakened the love of Jesus in the hearts of believers, encouraged them to be stedfast in the faith, and added, 'As far as it is revealed to me, I think the

victory is ours, and brother Domenico will come out unhurt if the trial take place. 'But whether it will take place or not, is not revealed to me by the Lord: if you ask me what I believe, I say, as a man, that seeing such preparation is made, I think it more likely than not.'

These words, taken in connexion with other ambiguous expressions attributed to him, show not only that he could not, but that he did not, pretend always to distinguish accurately between the thoughts which arose in his mind, according to the known general law of the Almighty, and those which he believed to proceed from the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit;—an uncertainty which has been considered by some as throwing discredit on the assertions of all who have claimed more than ordinary intercourse with God; as if we knew so perfectly the manner in which He is pleased to regulate his communication with mankind, that He could not deviate from his laws without our being immediately conscious of it: yet it would be a more reasonable inference to believe, that the control constantly exercised by the Father of spirits over our inmost souls, is far greater than we usually perceive, and that we should not expect the transition to be so striking from his ordinary to his extraordinary influence, if we were aware of the extent of the former.

Savonarola reminded his brethren to continue in prayer from the time Domenico entered the fire till he came out, exhorting them to speak humbly, not saying to their adversaries We have conquered, because it would be the work of God, and not theirs. 'For no one,' continued Savonarola, 'should be proud in the confidence of victory—much rather is it becoming to withdraw all earthly consideration, and to submit everything to God. Once more I repeat, that we have no need to prove the truth of our cause by

miracles, since that had been done sufficiently by other proofs. But, to maintain the faith aright, we have yielded to the challenge. 'Well then, my beloved!' (he concluded) 'remain here in prayer while I go to arrange the business, and doubt not that your prayers will be heard.' Finally, he gave the benediction, and almost the next moment came the mace-bearers from the Signory to summon him. It was the hour of mid-day;—and all was ready. The Signory had given the strictest orders for the prevention of all possible disturbances. The streets adjoining, and entrances to the Piazza, were barricaded, and only two of them were opened sufficiently wide for more than one to pass at the same time—yet the throng of the curious people was so extraordinary, that all houses on and proximate to the place were crowded to the roofs with spectators. For mutual safety there were, besides three hundred soldiers led by Salviati, drawn up for the Piagnoni and other adherents of Savonarola, and five hundred of the Compagnacci, under the roof of the Pisani, for the opposite party; and five hundred, under Aretino, surrounded the Loggia of the Signory, in obedience to the command issued. Besides these, four citizens of consideration were appointed, to prevent tumult among the disputants; for the Franciscans, Alberto and Antenori; for the Dominicans, Gualterotti and Ridolfi.

All Florence and its neighbourhood had assembled to witness this strange contest; and indeed,—considering what whirlwinds of strong passions were suspended to await this decision, and that the religious and political state of Florence, if not of all Italy, appeared to hang upon its result,—no wonder this solemn appeal to Heaven excited the most lively interest. The scaffold was erected on the side of the enclosure, next to the Golden Lion, and extended towards the roof of the Pisani, opposite to the street

leading to St. Cecilia, one end facing the Loggia, and the other the gate of St. Romolo. About one in the afternoon the multitude throng around the huge fabric composed of faggots and brushwood; it is eighty feet long, four feet thick, and nearly six feet high; a passage two feet wide divides it lengthwise; it is covered with oil and pitch, and sprinkled with gunpowder; so that in the words of an eye-witness, 'the furnace into which the Hebrew children were cast was not more dreadful.' In a moment all the various tones of hope and fear, indignation and triumph, are hushed; the Franciscans are seen advancing humbly, silently, barefoot, following their champion; they take their place in that division of the Loggia de Lanzi assigned to them. But where are Giuliano Rondinelli, and Francesca da Puglia? One, at least, is said to be in the palace of the Signory!

Before the murmur of the crowd arises again, the melody of sacred song directs all eyes to the brothers of Saint Dominic, preceded by the Acolyths. Savonarola walks at their head; his fine countenance, such as it appears in the portraits and medals still extant, not less ennobled by profound humility, than by an almost seraphic devotion; in his sacerdotal robes and cope, between Salvestro and Malatesta, he bears the consecrated host in a crystal vessel, and leads the voices of his brethren in a solemn chaunt of Psalm lxviii. 'Arise, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered.' The monks of San Marco follow two and two, each carrying a red cross, and chaunting in sonorous voice; last, Domenico da Pescia, also in his robes, with a red cope, embracing a crucifix, advances between a deacon and a sub-deacon; they place themselves beside their adversaries. The spectators carry lighted tapers in honour of the sacrament, and the Piagnoni are distinguished by red

crosses. Already the anticipation of horrors communicates a shudder throughout the more sensitive part of the multitude. But the judges are suspicious; some of them, at the instigation of the Franciscans, imagining that the monks may have used magical arts to secure them from the flames, demand that they should put off their robes. This objection is however over-ruled, upon the suggestion that the robes being linen, they must assist rather than prevent the action of fire. They content themselves therefore with marking one of the Dominicans, with whom Fra Domenico must change his dress under their eyes. He is already prepared to take this decisive step, when the Franciscans bring forward a new objection, that Fra Domenico should not go into the fire with the crucifix. It is replied, that this is the sign of the soldier of Christ, which he will not give up. Another difficulty is raised, when both champions are prepared for the trial. Savonarola delivers the host into the hands of his disciple; the Franciscans raise a violent outcry against the impiety of exposing the body of Christ to such peril; Domenico declares that he will not enter the flames without his God, in whom alone he trusts for deliverance. Savonarola explains that only the accidental part can be burned, but is misunderstood or disregarded. The debate is loud and angry, the bitterest taunts are thrown out on each side, when the Providence of God silences the disputants in an unexpected manner, which forbidding to either party the triumph of a miraculous victory, is yet interpreted by each as a special interposition in its favour. A furious storm of hail and rain, with thunder, lightning, and tempestuous winds, deluges the pile, so that it is impossible to light it. The populace, shivering and disappointed, cast the blame of failure on the cowardice or wickedness of the Dominicans, and pursue them to San Marco, shouting—

'This then is the meaning of your Viva Christo! you would expose Him to the flames.'

The people were thus disappointed in their expectations of a splendid melo-dramatic spectacle. A general dissatisfaction was displayed, and many even of Savonarola's adherents wished that he had ventured the ordeal, even if the opposite party had seceded. They overlooked, however, that in the general discontent, the policy and incredulity of the Franciscans would not have permitted this. Thus was gained what the enemy wanted. The hold that Savonarola once had on the multitude was gone. On his return to San Marco, though guarded by the whole array of his adherents, he was insulted on many sides, and could only be protected from being stoned by their resistance.

The chief object of his enemies was indeed frustrated, but they the more zealously took advantage of the public disappointment, and the disturbance of people's minds by the rumour which was diligently spread, before the crowd was come to be clear on what had taken place, that Savonarola had wished sacrilegiously to expose the host to the fire, with a view of practising some further cheat, as they chose to allege, on public credulity.

On the morning of April 8, Savonarola once more entered the church of San Marco, but he not only spake briefly, but appeared deeply humbled. Nevertheless, he exhorted his hearers to constancy, since their God had visibly fought for them; and at the conclusion, declared, that he was ready himself to die as a sacrifice to the cause of truth. Several of his most distinguished friends had, however, already withdrawn to their villas, and they who were left were defenceless. The Compagnacci, with the clergy of the Duomo, had taken the resolution to hinder in the afternoon the Dominican, a certain Fra Mariano,

from holding his accustomed vesper in the cathedral. The vesper however was prolonged beyond the usual time, and Fra Mariano had ascended the pulpit, when they crowded into the cathedral, and drove the congregation out with great noise. The intimidated audience fled away, whereupon the insolent mob went through the streets in different directions, with the loud cry, 'To San Marco—to San Marco!' Others, in the meantime, occupied the corners of the streets, to keep away the adherents of Savonarola from San Marco, by insult, threats, and even by force. So flowed the hostile crowd to San Marco, while they already marked the way to it with blood.

A noble youth, who was going, praying privately to himself, from San Marco to the church of S. Annunziata, was thrown down on his back amid insulting cries, as the wild mob approached and cast stones into the church of San Marco, while the people in it were still singing vespers. Many brothers provided themselves with weapons, but Savonarola advised them to use no other than spiritual arms, and ordered them all to prayer.

But while he was at the altar, occupied in devotion, Domenico and others determined on vigorous measures. The monks and novices fought valiantly; Nerli, one of the assailants, lost an eye. Among the Piagnoni, a youth of the Pantiatichi was mortally wounded, and fell at the feet of some monks, who carried him to the steps of the great altar, where with a joyful countenance he asked for the holy communion, saying, 'I was never in my life so happy as now; I heartily thank God who has given me so great a blessing;' soon after he yielded up his spirit to his Creator. The outer doors being burned, the besiegers attempted to get into the choir, when a German, Nercio by name, mounted the pulpit with a musket, which he had ventured to go through the

crowd to fetch, and killed many of the enemies, calling out each time he fired, 'O Lord! save Thy people, and bless Thine heritage,' for he fired at random, friends and foes being mingled together. The church was full of smoke, so that the brethren could hardly remain in the choir around the host, till a novice broke the window over the great altar with a lance, and the smoke cleared away a little. The poor monks began to faint with distress, and also with hunger, for they had taken nothing that day but a few dry loaves and a little wine, which was brought them from the sacristy.

As soon as the Signory had heard the noise, the watchman of the principal place was sent away to take possession of the cloister—but at the same time, in the assembled college it was determined and made known, that all the laity who were in the cloister of San Marco, should leave the same within an hour, and no citizen should enter it again under punishment for contumacy. That further, all brothers of the cloister should give up their arms on demand —and that Savonarola should quit the Florentine territory, promising to be answerable for their safety, as otherwise they could not protect the convent from demolition, or its inhabitants from massacre. When the ordinance had appeared, Savonarola wished to leave the cloister, and to deliver himself up to the Signory—but he was kept back by the others, because they justly feared for his life. Besides which, the messengers were not furnished with any credentials, and might have come without authority. Many distinguished citizens, who when the noise arose had hastened to San Marco, left now the cloister, and escaped privately by the garden door.

One of these, Francesci Valori, a venerable old man, returned to his house, where, however, he was immediately besieged by the mob. In a moment,

whilst the messenger of the Signory was summoning him to appear before it, his wife, who was speaking to the people from a window, was mortally wounded by an arrow from a cross-bow; but he himself, in endeavouring to escape to the palace of the Signory, was murdered by Vincenzio Ridolfi and Tornabuoni, whose relations, through his influence, had been beheaded in the preceding August for high treason. The palace of Valori was plundered, and a little child of his suffocated in its sleep. The palace of Andrea Cambinis and the house of an artist, who was known as a zealous adherent of Savonarola, experienced the same fate. Other buildings were protected from the rage of the people only by the officers of the Signory. The infuriate rabble would gladly have extended a vengeance which afforded so good an opportunity for robbery, but the principal men of all parties united with the Compagnacci in arresting the evil, so that only one more house was pillaged, and that belonged to a man known as a creature of Valori's, whose injustice and inhumanity were thus visited upon himself and his friend.

Upon this, the mob provoked by having been excluded from the Duomo during the morning service, armed with cross-bows, axes, and burning torches, stormed on with greater violence to San Marco; they laid fire to the doors of the church and the cloister, while others clomb the walls of the cloister-building, named Sapienza, lying near and uniting San Marco, to get by a subterraneous passage into the chief cloister. Thus they thronged into the church, where a small number of laity, with some brothers, continued to defend themselves on the inclosed choir, while Savonarola had retreated with the others into the library. The fight continued for several hours, without their daring to resist in the least the rude force of the people. But the Signory took care twice

to send their imperative commands, forbidding the defence of the cloister. Already there were several killed and wounded on both sides. When, at last, at midnight, negotiations were come to, officers of justice appeared and demanded Savonarola, with Domenico da Pescia and Silvestro Maruffi, under the promise of safe conduct before the Signory. Once more Savonarola addressed himself in a Latin speech to his brothers, and exhorted them to remain in the path of God, with faith, prayer, and patience, since the way to heaven led only through trouble: therefore they must not be terrified. Florence had at former times shown itself ungrateful for Divine benefactions; witness Catharine of Sienna, and the Archbishop Antonine; the less was it to be wondered at, if he experienced the same. Moreover, he was ready to endure all freely and willingly for the Lord's sake, since he knew that a Christian life consisted in doing good and suffering evil. He and Domenico then mutually confessed and administered the sacrament to each other, and partook of some refreshment. On his departure he gave up the keys belonging to the community to the brethren, with such demonstrations of humility and charity, that they could not refrain from tears: many desired to go with him, but he charged them upon their obedience to remain, as he and his companions would have to die for the love of Christ: then, having kissed all the brethren, opening the door of the library he gave himself into the power of the commissioners, recommending to their protection his flock and the other citizens associated with them. He was led away to the palace in company with the officers of justice and a guard of safety. The cries and rage of the mob were terrific, so that many believed he was slain: but the guard even protected him by making a roof of lances over his head; yet his hands were tied behind him like a criminal, and he

had to bear the bitterest insults, and ill-treatment of all sorts, to which the rudest mockings were not wanting. A savage fellow, however, who attempted to maltreat him was driven away by A. di Medici, one of the commissioners. Silvestro Maruffi had shortly before withdrawn himself, but when he learned the result, he demanded that they should lead him likewise to the Signory: whereupon he was led there with Alberti, a brother of Savonarola, who was also in attendance at San Marco. After some general questions concerning the truth of what hitherto he had preached and prophesied, and which Savonarola confirmed and maintained in the most decided manner, the three were directed to be separately imprisoned. On the appearance of the prisoners in the streets, shouts of exultation rent the air, and died away, but the silent prayers and tears which accompanied them left more lasting traces.

With the dawn of day the cloister was beset with many of the citizens who were hostile to Savonarola, and who with great care looked for arms; those they found, though partly taken from his enemies, were carried through the city for a show. Also, Savonarola's writing table, by command of the Signory, was emptied by Giovanni Berlinghiere, and the things found in it were distributed.

On the same day several expresses were dispatched to Rome, to report the particulars of the last forty-eight hours, until the capture of Savonarola.

In a tolerably similar writing sent to the ambassador, occurs the following statement.

'To be, at last, clear about the matter, it was ordered that the proposed fiery ordeal should take place; but, at the same time, Savonarola had brought to light his deceitful disposition, since he had hindered the trial by continual excuses. The day following all arose in great dissatisfaction, and stormed the

cloister. The Signory, on the other hand, to show themselves good sons of the Church, had ordered Savonarola out of their territory under punishment of contumacy, and as he had disobeyed, they had caused him to be taken prisoner, with two of his most zealous brothers.'

The ambassador at Rome, at the same time, had direction to beseech most pressingly his holiness for permission to make inquisition of the brothers. The Pope was greatly rejoiced at this news, and acted in such a manner as to leave no doubt that the whole infamous contrivance had proceeded from himself. Thus it was that the papal answer to a former writing of the Signory, concerning the fiery ordeal, was purposely delayed, while, yet, the ordeal was appointed. The decision of his holiness, which was to the purpose that the experiment itself, by the general decision of the whole college, should be prohibited as inadmissible, and contrary to the canonical law, came to Florence two days after the appointed time. But scarcely was the result of the affair known in Rome, before, on the 11th of April, two writings of approbation to Francesco and his order were prepared. Besides the general recognition of their zeal for the truth, and the honour of the holy chair, wherein all were exhorted to remain and proceed, in order to extinguish even the last traces of the destructive doctrine of 'the godless son, Hieronymus Savonarola,' those were, in particular, praised who had been ready themselves to go into the fire: so pious, religious, and memorable a work will remain unforgettable, and give to his holiness, as well as to the apostolical chair, especial and great satisfaction. Meanwhile, a writing was sent to the Signory, which reached Florence on the 13th of April, as is proved by a letter of the Ten to the ambassador at Milan, with the above date, wherein the

Pope expressed the liveliest thanks and the greatest pleasure at the course of the matter; and, at the same time, made many offers, if they would, after prosecuting the necessary inquiries, give Savonarola alive into the hands of his holiness. A second brief was addressed to the archbishop and the chapter of the Duomo, with the authority to absolve every one who had transgressed in this affair, even though by murder; whereupon all hastened to penance and absolution, even many by whom formerly the validity of Savonarola's excommunication was not recognized.

CHAPTER XIV.

INQUISITION AND MARTYRDOM.

Meditations on the fifty-first Psalm—Inquisition appointed—Savonarola questioned and tortured—Francesco Ceccone—Falsification of evidence and process—Condemnation—Thirty-first Psalm—Execution of Savonarola, Domenico da Pescia, and Silvestro Maruffi.

VERILY, superstition is a sword that hath a double edge, wounding him who wields it; yea, corrupt religion is a foul barrel, that explodes in the gunner's hand. Small was the taint of old impurity left in Savonarola's soul; and yet it sufficed, not only to emperil him, but also his most sacred cause, investing with suspicion motives and acts which lie near the very heart of truth, and if touched, involve its life in their mortality. But its effects upon the crowd are no less remarkable. Both worshipped alike that consecrated host as a god: Savonarola and his friends trusted in it to take them safely through the flames —as their guardian angel—the visible presence of Deity. Not less thoroughly trusted the crowd, but, unreasoning, yet feared this divinity might suffer from fire; at any rate, it was too sacred for experiment, which might undeceive the worshipper, to whom illusion was the soul of piety. Not the first time this,

that the same feeling had been manifested. There was once an ordeal in which a cross was enveloped in one of two bundles of wool, and he who took the bundle in which the cross was hidden, was acquitted. But a certain monarch thought that the cross was too holy a thing for such a test, and forbad its being any more subjected to the peril of irreverence by the chance of error. Proofs these, that the ordeal was never thoroughly believed in as an infallible trial, and that the adoration of symbols is implicated with opposite errors, as by a bipolar law.

Savonarola suspected no error here, and could not therefore be prepared for its antagonist reaction. He had, however, to suffer the results. For consolation in his imprisonment, he reverted again to his favorite book, the Bible, and in particular to the words of the sweet Psalmist of Israel. On one of these psalms he had hitherto purposely omitted to make any comment —it was the fifty-first—on the express plea that he reserved it for the day of adversity. This now he began to study afresh, and commenced writing meditations on, which are still extant,—a fact wherein his friends recognized a prophecy of his future sufferings, which we have other and better proof that he had always foreseen. Known to him was his work from the beginning, and from the first had he counted the cost of its performance. These are some of the words of his meditations :—

'' Against Thee only.'—Truly I have sinned against Thee only, Lord ! For Thou didst command that I should love Thee for Thyself, and all creatures for Thy sake ; but I have loved the creatures more than Thee, loving them for themselves. And what is sin but attachment to the creatures for their own sake ? and it is no less than opposing Thee. I have, then, sinned before Thee only, because I made creatures my God, and left Thee. Thee only have I

wronged; I have done evil before Thee, because I was not ashamed to sin before Thee. O God! how many sins have I committed before Thee, which I should not have committed in the presence of men! even such as I would not on any account that men should know. I have feared men more than Thee, because I was blind, and loved the creature. Thou hast loved the truth.' (Here are enumerated the promises fulfilled to Abraham, David, and others.) 'Surely Thou wilt not reckon iniquities, because Thou lovest truth, and hast loved it with immense love! What is that truth which thou hast loved? Is it not thy Son, who said, I am the Truth and the Life? He is, then, the truth from which all truth in heaven and earth is named. Thou hast loved Him, and in Him alone wert well pleased; for that Thou didst find Him without spot, and wouldest that He should die for sinners. Maintain, then, this truth; here am I a great sinner, in whom Thou mayest maintain it, to whom Thou hast pardoned many sins, washing them out by the blood of Thy Christ, and covering them by his passion. Why, Lord, didst Thou give me this knowledge of Thy Son? Why didst Thou give me this faith in Him? Didst Thou give it me that I should have the more sorrow, seeing my redemption, and not being able to attain it? No, certainly; Thou didst give it me that I, seeing pardon prepared for me, should take it by the grace of Christ. Receive me, then, Lord! since Thou hast manifested to me the unknown and hidden things of Thy wisdom, that this knowledge may profit me and conduct me to salvation.'

On the last verse, 'Then do they offer bullocks upon Thine altar,'—'When they offer in Thy name their bodies to the cross, that is to torments and death. I pray Thee receive me as a sacrifice to justice, an offering in holiness, a holocaust of religious

life, as the young bullock of Thy cross, through which I have a claim to pass from this vale of misery to that glory which Thou hast prepared for those who love Thee.'

Meanwhile the Signory, having appointed a college of sixteen judges of inquiry, to whom two commissioners from Rome, assisted by several Franciscans, two priests, the vicar of the archbishop (who was a Medici), and the vicar of the bishop of Florence, were added, and being, in consequence of a resolution and decree of April 11th, invested with absolute authority, they proceeded at once to the hearing of the prisoners; wherein they sought to bring Savonarola to recant his predictions, by questions accompanied first with threats of torture, and at last by the infliction. It appears that the superstitious feeling in them could be satisfied with nothing less than his explicit confession of his having been a false prophet. All things concurred in announcing the reformation he had foretold, and common sense would not permit such an absurdity. The examination was tedious, but Savonarola maintained his wonted intrepidity and composure, repeating all he had ever said. His judges trembled, but they stifled their convictions, and found it more easy for them to torture than to answer the victim. The first grade was accordingly tried. His hands being bound behind him he was suspended to a pillar by a cord, which was suddenly let go, that he might fall, not touching the ground, with a dislocating jerk, whereby he suffered the severest pain in every limb. Francesco degli Albizi, one of the deputies, was so disgusted with this exhibition, that he left them, saying, 'His house should not be polluted with the blood of the just.' And thus ended the first day's examination.

Torture proved, indeed, to be a peculiarly severe trial for Savonarola. Of an ardent imagination, and

a sanguine temperament, possessing also the constitutional irritability of extraordinary genius, his frame was singularly sensitive, his nerves violently excitable, besides his health being exceedingly delicate. There was every thing to put his fortitude to the proof. His habit, also, of making subtle distinctions, his expressions of willingness to submit to the *true* pope and the *true* Church, with the mental reservation not to submit to the existing pope and Church, as not true, were eagerly taken advantage of by the questioners, and attempted to be perverted into recantations. The rack is not the place to moot the nice points of a differential moral calculus; and before he could utter the second half of an infinitesimal analysis, Savonarola was silenced by anguish, and what he had said quoted as a recantation, apart from the qualification which pain had prevented him from adding. When, however, he was restored to his senses, Savonarola uniformly recanted his so-called recantations, and refused to sign the written deposition, as containing only half truths and conveying erroneous impressions. This boldness somewhat reassured him in credit with the populace; but the time was passed for him to reck any longer of earthly reputation, his regards now were all towards God and eternity,—his fame in heaven, and the perfect witness of the All-judging.

'Willing in the spirit,' then, but 'weak in the flesh,' Savonarola, with a patience almost divine, appeared the second day before the Inquisition. Other instruments of torture were then tried, and he was threatened with still more painful punishments—coals being burned under his feet. Nothing could, however, be obtained but dark and doubtful declarations, which were interpreted and used by the judges in their own meaning. Savonarola reasserted that he had always preached only the truth, adding, that if indeed he had

said anything else while suffering torture, such averments were to be accounted false, or as merely proceeding from excess of pain. When the pangs to which he was so cruelly subject were at the highest, his exclamations were loud and urgent. 'Lord!' he cried, 'take my life.' Thus baffled, the murderous inquisitors proceeded to examine several citizens and brothers of San Marco, in the hope of thereby obtaining evidence regarding the private alliances or conspiracy that they supposed him to be engaged in with other parties, perhaps of the highest consideration. The first among them was Fra Roberto di Gaglano, who was examined especially touching a vindicatory writing from Savonarola to the pope, in the June of the previous year (1497), of which he confessed himself the author; adding, that he was present at the time when the paper was laid out for signatures; that he had read it out to those who came, and had even signed several names by proxy; but denying that Savonarola himself had ever stood in any nearer or private relations with the citizens, since he had personally known very few. Fra Silvester, however, always brought writing tablets with him, to mark the names of those whom he had learned to know more intimately. Other witnesses gave similar evidence. Sixteen in all were examined, and accredited their declarations with their signatures. These affirmed that they had esteemed Savonarola for a prophet, wherein they might have erred; but they knew nothing of him that was culpable.

When the judges perceived that by such means they could not attain their purpose, that the rumour might get abroad that Savonarola was innocent, and that the people, if the examination were procrastinated, might rise in his favour,—albeit they had taken care to counteract such an accident, by false reports and calumnies, wherein the Franciscans were very ser-

viceable,—they engaged a certain Francesco Ceccone, a Florentine notary, and a man of very bad credit, to supply them with a forged protocol on the further hearing, so that they might pronounce the sentence of death. Accordingly, while the customary notary was proceeding with the given protocol, Ceccone, seated in a hidden corner, was more rapidly preparing another, wherein the frequently undefined and general answers of Savonarola were arbitrarily altered, enlarged, or interpreted. This piece of work was soon afterwards printed as it now stands, as it was said, against the will of the villain who had performed it. They wished to spare nothing that might heap up charges and accusations against Savonarola, but were not very careful that the appearance of justice should support the sentence on which they were predetermined. The passionate hate of his judges had not only stifled in them all respect for right and law, but run ahead of that cunning and slyness, which are generally with the wicked esteemed the substitutes of wisdom and discretion.

What they principally wanted in this fabricated narrative, was to represent Savonarola as confessing that his prophecies were impostures, and that his censures of the Romish hierarchy were induced by a wish to abase its rulers, in order that, by the reputation of superior sanctity, he might himself become pope. How far his opinions were heretical they cared not much to inquire. Savonarola's movement had altogether been rather practical than speculative; it was his conduct, not his creed, that was arraigned. Of the statements thus attributed to him, the following are the chief:—First of all, as to his prophecies. These he is made to confess that he had not received from a higher revelation, but from grounds of reason and the study of Holy Writ. That he had also never maintained that he possessed higher revelations, but

had asserted the perfect certainty of his revelations to win respect for himself; honour and fame from the world, especially, had been his only aims. He had, therefore, invited a general council to put down many prelates and the pope himself, because they lived a scandalous life, and had persecuted him; but principally because he had hoped to get into their place. Lastly, he had asked for a democracy in Florence, which had been the most favourable to his views. The frequent processions and strict life he had recommended and practised, originated in mere hypocrisy. He had separated himself from the Lombard congregation, in order to be free and to act in his own way. He had not entered very closely into state affairs, because he understood nothing about them, and because he was sure of his adherents, to whom he had afforded every information whenever they consulted him. He had written several times to the king of France, to exhort him to restore the Florentine possessions, but never received an answer. He never stood in connexion with Pietro de' Medici, because he was his enemy. In respect of the reacquisition of Pisa, he never knew any thing certain, but had made his assurances from mere probability. The signatures in San Marco in his favour were collected without his knowledge; but he was much pleased with the good-will of the citizens. He had held the excommunication for valid, but when he saw it would ruin his cause, he had not regarded it, and had called on all men not to recognize it. For the same reason he had, on the 11th of February, begun to preach again, though dissuaded from it by several of his friends. In general, he had sought to make himself the first man in the world. Of the fiery ordeal he greatly disapproved, but he had consented to it for the preservation of his credit. Further, he was resolved not to let Fra. Domenico go into the

fire, if the Franciscans retreated, but that, if the ordeal was made, he might take the sacrament, which would certainly have protected him. To the question whether he would confess this before the people, he replied that he was fearful of being stoned.

How much of the contents of what is just given may be esteemed genuine, and how much is to be set down to the account of the unskilful falsifier, is so plain as to need no remark. It contains not the least reason for a condemnation of Savonarola. For no one will fail to observe on what motives the business was transacted. If the people would only permit themselves to be persuaded that they had reason to be angry with Savonarola, his enemies felt that they had no need to fear the charge of injustice. But what can be more hateful than thus to impose on and cheat the popular apprehension? and that they had so done, there were not wanting extensive and well supported proofs. The more discerning, indeed, could not be deceived, had passion not blinded them, by so small an ostent of justice. Soon after the death of Savonarola, accordingly, the injustice of the proceeding, as well as the falsification of the act of process, was not only decidedly declared by his adherents, Pico, Burlamacchi, and Fra Benedetto, but throughout implied by the historians, Nardi and Guicciardini. The true process and accurate report of the Inquisition, however, has never been published or discovered.

To satisfy in some degree the extravagant expectation of the public, six brothers of San Marco were summoned before the court, to communicate to them, in presence of the vicar of the archbishop and the bishop, the result of the inquiry. But this took place, as Guicciardini remarks, in brief and general terms, that the door might be opened to different interpretations. When Savonarola was asked if it were all true, he answered, 'What I have written is

true;' and when the notary inquired further, 'Is all word for word,' he replied, 'Word for word!' Whereupon the clergy and brothers of San Marco subscribed to the acts in the way of attestation. To the latter, Savonarola then said, 'How I have lived and taught among you is unknown to no one who is acquainted with me. In this great and extreme trouble, I command you in two ways;—first, that all brothers devote themselves, according to their powers, to the novices, and keep them in the fear of God and the simplicity of the Christian life in which they have been instructed;—and next, that you pray earnestly for me to God, since now his prophetic Spirit has almost entirely deserted me.' A touching admission this, as if the power of his persecutors had so far prevailed as to obscure the certainty he had previously felt, that the reformation of the Church was nigh its advent. Perhaps induced by the singularity of this, Fra Malatesta said anxiously, 'Is what I have subscribed true?' Savonarola was at first silent, but soon, with a sigh, rejoined, 'I will not be asked further.' But Malatesta impatiently replied, 'Ex ore tuo credidi, et ex ore tuo discredo[1].' When the other brothers were informed of this, there arose among them a great disunion, as many of them were perplexed in their good opinions, while others were still more strengthened. Most thought that he designedly, in imitation of many prophets of the Old Testament, had given double answers, and they remembered, not inappropriately, thereon, that Thomas Aquinas expressly held that no one was bound to declare the truth in the presence of a court of justice, if he were asked out of legal order. In any case, the double answer was the clearest that he could give before such judges; and if his friends took offence

[1] I have believed your word, and I do not believe your word

at the human weakness of one so sorely afflicted, they unjustly forgot what he had so frequently declared, that they should not believe him as a man, but the Word of God that was put into his mouth. From this time they allowed the people entrance into the great hall, where, in the absence of the judges and seniors, and the accused himself, the declarations of Savonarola were publicly read out by a notary.

Nevertheless, the Signory appeared discontented with the result obtained. In a writing to the Pope of the 21st of April, they thanked him for the permission he had given to torture the three clericals, but excused themselves at the same time for not being able to communicate an accurate abstract of the inquiry; since scarcely any thing had been educed after several days of sharp examination.

To be certain, beforehand, of the new Signory, which was to come into office on the 1st of May, there were, by command of the present existing Signory, shortly before the day of election, about 200 citizens expelled from the great council. Veri di Medici was named for Gonfaloniere, who, with the Signory of the same opinion as himself, proceeded with the cause of Savonarola in the way it had commenced. The Pope repeated anew the request, that the monk, meaning Savonarola, should be delivered up to him, and the ambassador added the assurance that they would so much oblige the Pope thereby, as to obtain from him their wishes in regard to Pisa. But they appear to have feared some loss of dignity in this, and insisted that further inquiry, and the punishment itself, should be consummated at Florence, in the presence of two papal commissaries. And thus,—the Piagnoni having, at this time, no voice in the magistracy, and the papal party being loud in their execration of the excommunicated heretic, who

had instructed the Florentines to expect succour from a foreign prince, and the faithful subjects of Rome to look for other guidance than that of the ruling pope,—Savonarola was left to console himself for the remainder of his imprisonment by pursuing his task of commenting on the psalms. The following meditation on the thirty-first psalm contains his last written thoughts.

'Sorrow has surrounded and besieged me with a strong host, has taken possession of my heart, and ceases not day and night to contend against me. My friends have gone over to its banner, and have become my enemies. All that I see and hear bears the sign of sorrow—the thoughts of my friends disturbs and troubles me—the remembrance of my brothers grieves me. The retrospect of the cloister and the cell gives me anguish—the consideration of my studies gives me pain—the recollection of my sins oppresses me. As to him sick of the fever, all sweets seem bitter; so for me does every thing change itself into sorrow and sadness. Truly a heavy burthen of the heart! The poison of serpents—the destructive pestilence — murmur against God — cease not to vilify God—exhort to despair. Unhappy man, I; who will deliver me from their God-offending arms? When all that I see and hear contends against me, who will protect me? who will help me? whither shall I go? how shall I escape? I know what I will do, I will turn myself to the Invisible, and oppose it to the visible. And who shall be the leader of this mighty host? Hope, the invisible, shall fight against sorrow—who can stand against hope? Yes, thou Lord! art my hope, the highest refuge art thou: who will stand against the Lord? who can storm his refuge? Him then will I call—surely He will come, and not abandon me to shame. Look, He comes already, brings joy, teaches me to

contend, and says, 'Cease not to call; speak with confidence, and from a full heart! On Thee, O Lord, have I trusted—I shall not be given over to eternal shame.' O! wonderful power of hope, before whom all sorrow yields, all ready consolation comes. Let now sorrow be loud with its whole host—let the world press—let enemies arise—I fear nothing; on thee O Lord have I trusted—thou art my hope—my refuge art Thou! While I hear these words of hope, my first wish is to be free from my sins, and to attain to the Eternal, by thy mercy. That I wish before all—for my sins are the greatest trouble—from which all other trouble proceeds. Take away, Lord, my sins, and I am freed from all trouble. Yes! set me free, not according to my righteousness, but according to thy mercy! For I seek thy compassion, I do not offer my righteousness! But if thy mercy has made me righteous, I have also thy righteousness. But new doubts arise again. 'Few only, it is said, are chosen.' Dost thou expect to be numbered with the few, thou who hast sinned in so many ways, who hast been an offence in the Church, who hast offended heaven and earth?' New consolation in calling on the Lord, who has promised, in Scripture, 'in the day that the sinner calls on Me, I will no more remember all his sins?' So doubt and encouragment, alternate, in the thought of the consolation of the Gospel, until with the beginning of the third verse, 'for my strength and my refuge art Thou; for the sake of thy name Thou wilt guide and lead me;' perfect rest is again obtained.

The continuation is broken off, because the materials of writing were taken away from Savonarola.

At length, the matter was pressed to its final issue, and the acts that were required for it were directed to be forwarded to Rome. There it was soon decided, and Savonarola was condemned as a here-

tic, schismatic, disturber of the Church, and perverter of the people. Two papal commissioners, Gioachimo Turriano, general of the Dominican Order, and Francesco Romolino, doctor of laws, and afterwards made cardinal, were commissioned to carry the sentence, and to be present at the execution of the punishment. In Rome, the sentence of death was already signed, the pope having declared that Savonarola should die, though he were John the Baptist. On coming into Florence, accordingly, Romelino could assure the enemies of Savonarola, that in any case he must die. The form, however, required a second hearing, whereupon Savonarola was examined in presence of some Signors, and of the papal commissioners, on the contents of the process before them, when he again declared in the most decided manner, that all he had formerly said and preached was pure truth—but all that he had retracted and recalled, if he had done so, was false, and the effect of pain and the fear of torture; and that he should so retract, and so reassert again and again, as often as they might torture him. Taken by surprise at this answer, Romelino threatened him again with the torture, whereupon Savonarola, after a few strokes, acknowledged the truth of the contents, thus saving himself further needless pain. The same took place with the other two prisoners. But they believed universally, that at least Domenico da Pescia would be acquitted, because he was beguiled by his simplicity. When, however, some one mentioned the consideration, that by his zeal the affair might be renewed, Romelino declared, 'One brother, more or less, was indifferent—but let him die.'

The sentence was not pronounced in the council, when one Agnolo Niccolini, an intelligent and experienced man in matters of State, but neither friend nor foe of Savonarola, ventured to propose the pre-

servation, to science at least, of so distinguished and even gifted a man as Savonarola, inasmuch as they could keep him, if found guilty, in safe custody in any fortress or prison, and provide him there with books and writing materials—that his death without profit might not, with the intelligent, conduce to the shame of the State. But the enemies of Savonarola answered, that such advice was indeed humane, but gave no sufficient security to the Republic, because no one could stand surety that Savonarola would not be set in freedom by another administration, and so raise new troubles. Nay, his writings might be as mischievous as those of the pestilent heretic Wickliff. Against such a proposition too, there was an old proverb—'A dead man causes no war.'

Thus all three were condemned to death, being sentenced to be hanged and burned at Florence, on the day of the Vigil of the Ascension.

On May 22, the sentence was made known to the brothers, and the execution on the following day announced, and according to custom, a priest appointed to converse with each. Savonarola and Fra Domenico were very composed—the latter wrote besides to the brothers at Fiesole, where he was prior, admonishing them to continue in love and holy exercises—to pray for them, and to bring the writings of Savonarola from his cell into the library—and to place a copy in the Refectorium, to read out from them at times at table. At their request to confess, three Benedictines were granted, and not, as would have been fair, members of their order.

In the evening, Savonarola asked permission to speak with his companions in suffering, which was accorded, at the intercession of his spiritual attendant, whereupon all three were allowed to converse together, and fettered by their feet, an hour long in the hall of the palace. Fra Domenico had in the

'zeal of martyr-error,' desired to be burned alive. Savonarola dissuaded him from this wish. 'It less becomes us,' he said, to select our manner of death, since we know not whether we shall be able to bear it.'. Silvestro Maruffi also wished to assert openly on the day of execution their innocence. But Savonarola dissuaded him; citing the example of Christ, who with the most perfect innocence did not choose to testify it on the cross.

At early dawn of May 22, all three came once more together to receive the sacrament. Then Savonarola thus prayed aloud—'Lord, I know Thou art the true Creator of the world, and of the race of men. I know Thou art the holy indivisible Trinity, I know Thou art the eternal Word, who didst come from heaven to earth in the virgin womb of Mary; Thou hast raised thyself upon the tree of the cross, to shed thy holy blood for our sins and our misery. To Thee I pray, my Lord; to Thee I pray, my Saviour; to Thee, I pray, my Comforter, that Thy sacred blood may not be shed in vain for me, that it may flow for the forgiveness of all my sins; for them do I entreat Thy pardon, for all that I have committed from the day of my baptism to this moment. Before Thee I confess my guilt, I pray Thee forgive me all the wrong I have done to this city and people in spiritual and temporal things, and all that I cannot know of myself, O Lord, in which I have gone astray. In lowliness, I beg forgiveness of all who are assembled around me, and that they may pray for me, that Thou mayest strengthen me in my last hour, and that the enemy may not obtain dominion over me.'

Having so prayed, Savonarola administered the sacrament to himself, and then to them, on which the brothers were conducted down the stairs. Meanwhile Savonarola addressed words of consolation and exhortation to his brother, Silvestro Maruffi, who had

shown himself till then less composed. They were led through the large hall which, at Savonarola's suggestion, had been built for the reception of the general council, and during their passage exposed to much insult, then brought to the Piazza. A funeral pile was heaped around three stakes, on the very spot where, a few weeks before, stood that which was intended for the ordeal by fire. The same multitude assembled, with the same eager curiosity, but with less uproar; the enemies of the Piagnoni were appeased by the prospect of speedy vengeance, and their friends terrified into silence. When Domenico arrived at the stake, he said to the bystanders, 'Why do you not prompt me to say the Te Deum?' They replied, 'We should be cut to pieces.' He then told them to join him in saying it softly. The confessor asking if Savonarola had any thing to say, he answered only, that he should pray for him, and admonish his followers not to be scandalized at his death: Silvestro, though before much dejected, felt his spirit revive as the hour approached.

There were three different elevations erected on the place of execution; on the first, next the palace, stood the bishop of Vasona, Benedetto de Pagagnotti, a former pupil of Savonarola, who, by the strict command of the pope, though not without resistance, was compelled to disrobe the brethren of their clerical dignity, and to read out to them the brief of degradation, already prepared on the 11th of May, wherein Savonarola was designated 'The son of blasphemy, the nursling of destruction, and the seducer of the people.' During the ceremony of stripping him of his sacerdotal dress, degrading him from his office, and expelling him from the Church, Savonarola remained silent and abstracted, as a man who had already separated himself from the world, wherein he had no longer any work to perform for his Divine Master; but when

the bishop took him by the hand, and instead of the form, 'I separate thee from the Church Militant,' used the words, 'I separate thee from the Church Triumphant,' Savonarola replied, loud enough to be heard by those standing round, 'From the Militant, but not from the Triumphant; that thou canst not do.' Thus, while men cut him off from the visible church, his joyful hope of being admitted to the assembly of saints in the presence of his Lord grew brighter, and he felt himself once more not forsaken, but accepted in the Beloved.

From thence the brothers were led to the second tribunal, where the commissaries read the papal sentence, in which all three, without naming any particular crime, were condemned as heretics. Next something was offered them to eat and drink, which Savonarola refused with the words, 'For what purpose, when I am parting from life?' To another, who reminded him, for his consolation, of what he had formerly done, he replied, 'Praise and honour of men I need not.' And when a priest, of the name of Nerotto, asked him if he went composed and quietly to meet death, he replied, 'Should I not willingly die for His sake who willingly died for me, a sinful man?' Thereupon Remolino addressed to all three the words, 'His Holiness Alexander VI. frees you from the punishment of purgatory, gives you perfect remission of your sins, and places you in the state of your innocence;' which words the so-pardoned having heard with sunken head, withdrew.

At the third tribunal they were received by the Eight in council, where the sentence of the Signory having been read, they were then given over to the executioners. Arrived at the place of execution, the confessor asked Savonarola whether he had yet any thing to say before his last journey: "Pray for me,' said Savonarola, 'and tell my friends that they take

no offence at my death; but continue in my doctrine and in peace.' . . . . .

On the middle of the place was the scaffold erected, from which a high stake with a cross beam was raised. Silvestro first mounted the ladder, calmly and in silence, but with a tear in his eye; Fra Domenico followed him on the other side of the cross; and lastly Savonarola, for whom the middle place was destined, ascended the fatal steps, pronouncing to himself the Apostles' Creed. In the last moment Silvestro cried with a loud voice, 'Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit!' When come to the top, Savonarola once more, and for the last time, raised his eyes, and surveyed the thickly-crowded throng of people. For them the executioner had intended a peculiar spectacle; he wished to fasten in such haste the iron round the neck of Savonarola, and in the same instant to light the pile, that Savonarola, in dying, should be seized with a double pain; but he lost the iron among the faggots, and while he was seeking it, Savonarola had already given up the ghost. Also a scandalous man, who had been under the former government exiled from the city, but had lately returned, expressed his joy that he should now see Savonarola burned, whom he would have gladly helped to the stake; then taking a burning faggot, he assisted to light the torture pile, without the authorities present saying a word. Below there stood some wicked youths, who threw stones in such a mass, that the executioner could only save himself with difficulty. Although soldiers were posted round the place, they could not hinder pieces of Savonarola's body falling into the hands of some individuals. The joy of his enemies mingled with the rude cry of the crowd, 'Now, brother, it is time to do miracles.' In the same moment a violent wind drove the scarcely-kindled fire so strongly on one side, that for a long

while it did not touch his body. Universal fear seized on the multitude, so that they hastened from the spot; but the fire reunited, and the crowd returned. While Savonarola's arm was burning, they saw his right hand still raised with two fingers, as if he yet wished to speak his blessing on the people. Soon, however, the bodies mingled themselves with the ashes, which were taken thence in cars, and thrown from the old bridge into the Arno.

CONCLUSION.

'Omne quod male possidetur alienum est; male autem possidet qui male utitur. Fideli homini totus mundus divitiarum est; infideli autem nec obolus.'

St. Augustine.

CONCLUSION.

NOTHING the Church has so much dreaded as schism. There was danger of such when Paul found it needful to withstand Peter to the face. Not alone a superstitious adherence to passing institutions, but the introduction of new abuses and corruptions into the ancient faith, alike incur the peril of schism. Sectarism, however, is not necessarily schism, for Tertullian called the whole Christian brotherhood *hanc sectam*, using the term in its original and proper sense—of a body of men united by certain tenets. Guizot observes, that many of the doctrines controverted by the Fathers on both sides,—such as those between Augustine and Pelagius,—were held as the dogmas of opposite sects, without implying formal separation from the Church, the formation of distinct religious societies, or necessitating a peculiar organization or worship. The doctrines were pure opinions, debated among enlightened men, and varying both in their credit and in the degrees of their deviation from the general belief; but never such as to menace a formal schism. Heresy itself had not the formidable mean-

ing now attached to it, and might be ascribed to a system without intending its condemnation. Variety in the unity of the sacred Rose may be permitted, without impairing its beauty or its fragrance; but sever and scatter its petals, the beauty is lost immediately, and the fragrance soon perishes.

Chillingworth takes the same view of Protestantism. 'As on the one side,' he reminds the Romanist, 'I do not understand by your religion the doctrine of Bellarmine, or Baronius, or any other private man amongst you, nor the doctrine of the Sorbonne, or of the Jesuists, or of the Dominicans, or of any other particular company among you, but that wherein you all agree, or profess to agree,—the doctrine of the council of Trent; so accordingly, on the other side, by the religion of Protestants I do not understand the doctrine of Luther, or Calvin, or Melancthon, nor the Confession of Augusta, or Geneva, nor the Catechism of Heidelberg, nor the Articles of the Church of England, no, nor the harmony of Protestant Confessions, but that wherein they all agree, and which they all subscribe with a greater harmony, as a perfect rule of their faith and actions; that is, the Bible. The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants.'

The appeal by both parties to the doctrine of a council on the one hand, and the record of revelation on the other, was only an endeavour to recover pristine unity, now lost. It was vain in regard to the Romanist, because his Church was older than the doctrine and the council; and notwithstanding the superior antiquity of the Bible, and the incautious assertion of Chillingworth, it was vain for the Reformist, the Church being more ancient than the Scriptures.

The first breach in the Church's unity was made when one or more members asserted superiority over

others; the second, when they separated from the general body of Christians those who were of different opinions from the rest, or dared to think for themselves, independent of authority. The distinction between clergy and laity, though of very early, nay, of immemorial origin, was not from the beginning. No doubt it was derived into Christianity from the corresponding institutions of Judaism; there is, however, no text in the New Testament which refers to the Jewish priesthood, other than in connexion with Christ himself, as the only Priest of the new dispensation. This is indeed the characteristic distinction between the two systems; accordingly, all the primitive converts were entitled to preach, and as many as chose did preach; though it soon became convenient, for obvious reasons, to select some especially for the office. When this, instead of a mere expediency, was claimed as an exclusive right, then a schism commenced which laid the foundation of much evil. It was not, however, until the sixth century, that it began to show itself in a cardinal form, and attain its manhood; it was, as it were, the sixth day of the Christian Church, wherein the carnal Adam was perfected, and manifested as a separate existence. Leo the Great had already laid the corner-stone, and then Justinian contributed to the elevation of the papal edifice, which gradually received augmentation, until the world groaned under the intolerable abuse. Then were first apostolical succession, the dignity of the clergy, the authority of the Church, prominently asserted, and the assertion was repeated for centuries after. But then it is confessed even by Fleury, that the brightest days of the Church had passed—the period when martyrs were sanctified, when monastic solitude was solemnly holy, when prelates were poor, and pious, and disinterested—pure in their election, austere in their life, great only in their office, rigorous

in their discipline, a period whose traditions are authoritative and its antiquity venerable. This period was passed, and the age of St. Clement had given place to that of St. Gregory; the Church was changed in government, discipline, spirit, and principle.

The tendency which the assumption of an exclusive priesthood possesses to produce schism, has been singularly illustrated in our day, by the attempt made in a moment of anger, and from motives of political excitement, to claim as of apostolical right what had only been conceded as of temporal expedience. The Church of England is now consequently divided into two parties, and one or other of them thereby placed in a condition of heresy.

Holding, as the writer of the present work does, with those who seek the final identification of the Church with the state (a hope which other holy men besides Savonarola have entertained, though perhaps none so boldly ventured, or had so fair an opportunity of attempting it in practice), he differs from those who seem to maintain that this desirable theocracy is to be promoted by drawing the line of demarcation between the clergy and laity still broader and stronger. The demarcation itself grew out of the circumstance, that the former engrossed the learning of the time, while the latter were left to rust in ignorance. That circumstance no longer exists; and as it is proved that the Church once included all the professions, so now it may be contended that all the professions belong to the same everlasting order of the one Melchizedec, and that every learned man is, in virtue of his learning, a member of the clergy.

Agreeing, however, with the late Dr. Arnold, and with the present Archbishop of Dublin, in many things and in their general doctrine, we cannot exactly agree with their mode of stating it. They seem to deny the existence of a priesthood at all; the proof

of which, as a mere negative proposition, is in itself impossible, and can scarcely be attempted, reconcilably with the positive fact of one already existing, and established for many generations. This negative way of stating truths is highly inexpedient, particularly when the affirmative proposition better serves the purpose. We have the authority of Scripture for declaring, that the select Judaic priesthood was superseded in order that a universal priesthood might be established—a religion of which every member should be 'a king and priest unto God.' This is the view that Luther took of the question.

'It has been said,' Luther remarks, 'that the pope, the bishops, the priests, and all those that people the convents, form the spiritual or ecclesiastical estate; and that princes, nobles, citizens and peasants, form the secular or lay estate. This is a fine tale; but let no one be frightened by it. *All* Christians belong to the spiritual estate, and there is no other difference between them than that of the functions they discharge. We have one sole faith, one sole baptism, and that is what constitutes a spiritual man. The unction, the tonsure, the ordination, and the consecration the pope or the bishop gives, *may make a hypocrite*, but never a spiritual man. We are one and all consecrated priests by baptism, as St. Peter has said, '*Ye are priests and kings;*' although it does not belong to all to exercise such functions, *for no one can take what is common to all* without the will of the community. But if this consecration of God's were not upon us, the pope's unction could never make a priest. If ten brothers, sons of a king, having equal right of inheritance, were to choose one amongst them to administer for them, they would all be kings, and yet one alone of their number would be administrator of their common power. So it is in the Church. If some pious laymen were transported

to a desert, and not having amongst them a priest consecrated by a bishop, they agreed to choose one amongst them, married or not, that man would be verily priest as much as if all the bishops in the world had consecrated him. Thus were Augustine, Ambrose, and Cyprian chosen.'

The general recognition of this great doctrine, that 'all Christians are priests,' is the one great mean for restoring that unity in the Church, into which the contrary doctrine had introduced schism. It was of this that Savonarola had a distinct perception, when he wished to remain a lay-brother in the monastery of Bologna; nay, it is the doctrine especially assumed in the origin of monastic institutions, all of which at first consisted of laymen.

When Gregory the Great desired to consolidate the authority of a sacerdotal caste, he did what he could to widen the breach, and to increase the existing schism. He transferred the name of apostolical exclusively to the Roman see, and sanctioned with his authority the abuse of idols in the Church, forbidding their removal, on the plea of their imparting knowledge to the ignorant, and learning to the illiterate. It was because there existed a large class of the ignorant and illiterate that he was enabled to erect himself and successors into the ruling idols of the Church at large, and gain for himself and them esteem as the present and visible God in the temple of the Most High. By him the canon of the mass was introduced, and other pompous rites and ceremonies, which, in the opinion of Savonarola, so corrupted the simplicity of religious worship.

It was reserved for another Gregory, the Seventh of the name, to crown the arch of the system with its keystone. Little he thought that the means which he took for strengthening the fabric of the Church, would so much overlay as almost to crush it. Its

political establishment had well nigh superseded its spiritual character, until at length it became so secular, as in great part to lose that mysterious power of mind by which it swayed the grosser world. Separated from the laity, without being distinguished from it in piety or learning, the clergy at length invited opposition, as equally inimical both to the moral and physical interests of the rest of mankind.

Gradually the schism which had taken place in the body of the Church was to manifest itself in its chiefs, thus marking that it was attaining its climax. First, the pope was found usurping on the jurisdiction of the bishops, and making them as dependent on his opinion as they had previously made the laity on theirs. Bishops, accordingly, condemned by their metropolitans, crossed the Alps for redress; next, every priest canonically sentenced by his bishop, hurried to Rome for a repeal of the sentence. At length the papal Head itself became divided, and the impossibility of such unity as had all along been attempted, was demonstrated.

The influence that Catherine of Sienna had upon Gregory VII., and the part she took in the disputes between the rival pontiffs, were not a little remarkable, and show the dependence of learning upon inspiration. Gregory VII., we have seen, regretted on his death-bed that he had followed the counsel of a visionary, and neglected that of his rational friends. He took it for granted that that advice was designed for his personal benefit, or for the confirmation of the existing order of things. Otherwise was it designed by Providence, who had used her as the agent for promoting the grand schism, which was to testify to the existence of the hidden schism, by which all along the Church had been rent in her foundations. These had given way, and the deep-seated evil was now shown, not only in

the walls of the temple, but in its highest tower, which was split even at its apex. For more than twenty years this celebrated ecclesiastical feud divided the opinions and allegiance of Christendom. The co-existence of two supreme and infallible heads of the Church, each proscribing his competitor, and fulminating the terrors of damnation against the adherents of his rival, was not a little perplexing. All this, however, hindered not the canonization, eighty years after, of the prophetess who had conduced to the result. Wherein then lay the error of Gregory VII.? Even there, where lies the error of the Church in regard to authority. Learning, we have said, had substituted inspiration, and an orthodoxy was established from a catena of the opinions of those who had transmitted, from hand to hand, the original interpretation of Scripture. As the fathers had copied from one another, it is hard to conceive how they should disagree, except from the mere blunder of the copyist. Even in regard to the mystical interpretation, it is contended that fixed rules were established, according to which the symbols were limited in their meaning and application. Nevertheless, the Apostles themselves professed to have, and called upon others to have, 'a reason to give for the faith that was in them.' They, therefore, had a reason to give for such interpretations when first propounded, and if they since appeared arbitrary, it was only because the reason had been lost. To regain it the same power must be exerted by which it was originally won; unless so regained, all becomes a mere dead letter—both interpretation and symbol. The Church of Rome, however, never denied the continuance of inspiration, and though she persecuted some forms of it as heresies of opinion, occasionally she patronized others as prophetic or miraculous. But here came the constant error. As learning had

all along received the dicta of inspiration without claiming itself to be inspired, so now, in such instances as that of Catherine of Sienna, it placed implicit faith in the manifestation, without having any test by which it could be tried. Gregory VII. recognized no inspiration in himself, while recognizing it in the religious enthusiast by whom he was addressed. We have already proved that such inspirations are only subjective, and true to the individual receiving them, and need not be true to another; nay, are not permitted to be true to another, because the source of inspiration is open to all, and it amounts to a denial of the eternal verity to seek it through a secondary channel. Why go to your neighbour's tank when you have a fountain on your own premises? 'Drink water out of thine own cistern,' is the counsel of the wise man; but not that which Gregory VII. adopted. Fatal error! which substitutes the result for the process! It matters not, though the orthodox interpretation be ever so correct, if it have not been earned by the labour of the individual. He who receives it on authority only, can never understand what he receives. Hence, disbelief of all kinds. The speculative infidelity of the schools never exists but as a counterpoise to the practical infidelity of the Church; and never was there a *philosophical* atheist, who was more than an antagonist to those corrupt religious professors who make a god of their belly, and worship none but Mammon. How should I know what inspiration is, without conceding the possibility of being myself inspired? Scripture recognizes it as universal; and in the primitive Church it was recognized as equally belonging to the Apostles and the congregation. Can that be said to be a Church at all which disclaims it for both?. But God gives different answers to different men! Granted—he makes one

the steward of one truth, and another the steward of another. All so-called heresies are different phases of truth; nay, and at last, have their different representatives in exterior Church establishments as well as in individuals. Thus the Roman Catholic Church has for a long time been Pelagian; the Church of the Reformation is Augustinian; and, perhaps, the Greek Church may be said to be Cassianist. Truth, though but one, is many sided, and what is true to any individual is a segment of the whole truth, even as the individual himself is a veritable portion of the universe. The Churches, therefore, which exclude all phases but one as heretical, are themselves heretical—lose their catholicity, and become sectarian.

Not recognizing the great truth of universal inspiration—not acknowledging that the understanding in every man is given by the Spirit of God—the Scriptures were forbidden to private judgment. Yet, whatever might be the dogma of a self-constituted and usurping clergy, God still continued the gift to every man, and whoso would, might exercise it for his own profit and that of others. One of these willing channels of divine illumination was Savonarola—a man who, having been classically educated, and poetically inclined, became passionately devout, and recognized the enthusiasm by which he was impelled as nothing less than the life and presence of God in his own soul. To that God he sought by prayer, confident that the fitting answer would be returned, and accepted the convictions of his reason as prophetic impulses from the Divine wisdom. He was thrown into the Church at a time when all her abuses were ripening, and remained in it until they were fully matured, and the monster engendered of corruption ruled visibly in the mystic Babylon—the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. No doubt, whatever, can exist as to the relations between

Savonarola and Alexander VI. How gradually was iniquity added to iniquity, until hypocrisy was no longer available, and nothing but unblushing crime was left. The sins of Rome had reached unto heaven, and God was then beginning to show that He remembered her unrighteous deeds. This is the historical fact, which we know now that the cycle of that fearful time has long been closed, but which Savonarola knew at its commencement, and the advent of which he foretold. This was, as it were, the burthen of his lamentations, 'How much she hath glorified herself and lived in luxury, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow!'

Savonarola had to solve for himself the grand point on which the Reformation turned—how far it is lawful to resist, even to deposition, those who are lawfully invested with and who afterwards abuse sovereign authority? We have seen, that Savonarola held, that such tyrants had put themselves into a state of war with their species, and, as such, might be righteously slain; but, ere a subject becomes a tyrannicide, it behoves him to consider the expediency of the case, whether by the removal of the present evil he introduce not a greater future one. This expediency the casuists of the Church of Rome had interpreted so largely, that no choice was left to any one but to submit to whatever evil might be inflicted, though Satan himself might, even as he did in the person of Alexander VI., sit in the chair of St. Peter. But inasmuch as it is a law that one extreme should beget its opposite, this, however plausible in theory, was found impossible in practice; and the antagonist power was forming, which should effectually declare that spiritual despotism was ended, and proclaim liberty of conscience to those who had been long sitting in bondage and darkness, in the

midst of that great city which 'spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also the Lord was crucified.' Our own Wickliff, and the Bohemian Hüss, were of opinion with Saint Augustine and other authorities, that 'they who do not rule of God, and whom in having rule He does not acknowledge, there is no doubt they want a just dominion; nay, that if temporal lords do wrong and extortions to the people, they are traitors to God and his people, and tyrants of Antichrist.' But this doctrine is limited by other considerations, which Savonarola, as well as Wickliff and Hüss, was always ready to acknowledge. But such limitations are exceeded when no alternative is left, but either to disobey the temporal power, or Him from whom all power proceeds; nor can any exception be taken, when the opponent of abused authority seeks not to become an assassin, but a martyr.

The dispute which Savonarola had with Rome, unlike Luther's, involved not so much points of doctrine as points of practice. It was the demonstration of a high moral and spiritual nature against corruptions and abuses, equally abhorrent to the laws of virtue and the obligations of religion. His language was that of irrepressible indignation, and from the circumstances of his local position, was of as much political as religious influence. His time was too actively engaged to theorize on points of doctrine only. A sedulous reader of the Bible, his opinions were mainly derived thence, but he preferred those which bore upon the practices of the Church, and was prepared to condemn or to confirm them as he found warranty in Scripture. We have seen it somewhere written, that 'while at a distance from the world, Savonarola's mind had been open to the reception of all truth, he had listened to the Word of God almost exclusively, and learned purer doctrines

than those transmitted through a corrupt church; doctrines which Luther continued to learn with a mind wholly bent on theological investigation, and communicated to others, gradually, as they were presented to himself; but Savonarola, with only an imperfect apprehension of them, plunged into the temporal affairs of men, to use, for their benefit, the little knowledge he had acquired, and amidst the confusion and error by which he was surrounded, had much difficulty in holding fast that little, and no leisure to enlarge his store. The men with whom he was necessarily associated in the prosecution of his designs infected him with their superstitions; the injustice and opposition he encountered disturbed the exercise of his cool judgment; it was not till after the conclusion of his political career, that he advanced again beyond his times, and left behind both the world and the Church of Rome in his nearer approach to Divine truth.'

'This decision has such seeming truth, and is so sincerely intended to be friendly towards the character of Savonarola, that it deserves attention. That there was not the same progress in Savonarola's mind as in Luther's is plain; but this arises not from any deficiency in the former, but its superior clearness, its better knowledge, and its advanced position. He was not more superstitious than Luther, though more mystical and less doctrinal. If we were to compare Luther with St. Paul, we might compare Savonarola with St. John. One sought to discover TRUTH, the other to manifest LOVE. Religion with Savonarola was Love —commenced, continued, ended in Love. He was of the seraphic, rather than cherubic, nature. He was ever kindled and consumed with the zeal and energy of the affections on all occasions; he unavoidably exhibits the soaring and glowing fire of an erotic spirit. He began life with an affair of the heart, in

which he was disappointed, and commenced poet by composing amorous lyrics, which perished with the destruction of his hopes, and their elevation to celestial attachments—then, too, his muse became devout, but still the lyre was attuned to lays of love. Virtue, truthfully severe, and benevolently active, was then the beauty he turned to woo; and he pursued it, under all circumstances, even to suffering and death. Hence it was, that his precepts and example became so attractive and generative. Multitudes caught the magnetic influence—the flame spread from heart to heart—enthusiasm was communicated from soul to soul. The times are past in which he would incur sneers for attempting a theocracy—this being the point at which modern theologians, whether of the school of Pusey or of Arnold, are now aiming, and which they recognize as the final cause of the Church's existence. In his last perplexity, Savonarola conducted himself nobly—not retracting, as is pretended, though still distinguishing—willing to submit to constituted right, but yet protesting against misconstituted wrong—obedient to authority, but resisting its abuse. Savonarola, though weak in body, strong in spirit, manifested a dignity which compels us to confess that his Imitation of Jesus of Nazareth was so perfect, as scarcely to want any of the attributes which accredit the messengers of Divine truth, except that of miraculous power. In all other things, save in the superstition and error that seduced him into accepting the Ordeal, and exhibiting the Host, he will be found completely to have walked in the steps of his Divine Master, and to have presented a remarkable resemblance. The more we reflect on his career, the more we are surprised and astonished; it is likewise so unique, that even on this account alone it becomes more and more a marvel; its rarity, not less than its strangeness, excites our wonder.

Had it pleased Providence that Savonarola should have succeeded in effecting the Reformation of the Church instead of Luther, it would have been marked in some particulars by different characteristics. It would have been less in the spirit of St. Paul and more in that of St. John. We should have had less of faith and more of love. It would have retained less of ceremony, and recognized more of spiritualism. It would have been less Protestant, and more Catholic. Mystic sentiment would have been encouraged, not discarded. To this kind of feeling Luther's hard intellect was foreign; Savonarola's tender disposition friendly. D'Aubigné has indeed stated its freedom from mysticism, as among the merits of Luther's Reformation.

'The battle fought by the Reformation in the great day of the sixteenth century, under the standard of God's word, was,' he says, 'not one, and simple, but manifold. The Reformation had many enemies to combat at once; and after having protested against the decretals and the sovereignty of the popes, then against the cold apophthegms of the Rationalists, philosophers, or schoolmen, it turned its force likewise against the reveries of enthusiasm, and the hallucinations of mysticism; and against these three powers together, it plied with the sword and the buckler of God's holy revelations. There is, we must admit, a great resemblance, a striking unity, between these three potent adversaries. The false systems, which in all ages have been the most opposed to evangelical Christianity, always possess this distinguishing characteristic, that they make religious knowledge proceed from man's inward motive. Rationalism derives it from reason, mysticism from certain internal lights, Roman Catholicism from an illumination of the pope's. These three errors seek truth in man; evangelical Christianity

seeks it wholly in God; and whereas Rationalism, Mysticism, and Roman Catholicism, admit a permanent inspiration in some of our fellow-creatures, and thus open the door to all kinds of eccentricities and exceptions, evangelical Christianity recognises that inspiration only in the writings of the Apostles and Prophets, that alone exhibits that great, beautiful, and living unity, that comes down through all ages, evermore the same. It was the task of the Reformation to establish the rights of God's word, in opposition not only to Roman Catholicism, but also to Rationalism and to Mysticism.'

Now this can scarcely be admitted as a merit which is really a defect, because by the omission a want is left unsupplied, which nevertheless still exists. From the earliest to the latest times, the Church has admitted mystical interpretation; and if Protestantism has made no provision for it, it so far falls short of the Catholic measure, and the Christian capacity, and needs extension in that particular. But even in this defect, the wisdom of God, which dwells with prudence, is observable. An intellectual period had to be passed through, the science of religion needed to be decided, ere mere feeling or fancy could be trusted with emotions and imaginations, which, transcending understanding, require previous discipline to preserve them from extravagance. That period is now rapidly passing, and accordingly we find that the poetry of religion is succeeding to the logic, and adding that final grace, which is, as it were, the extract and the crown of consummated excellence.

The drama of Savonarola's life naturally ends with the committal of his ashes to the Arno; but there were some subsequent circumstances which may not inaptly be included in the epilogue, and which the reader will not be displeased at having related.

On the day itself of the execution, several ex-

presses were sent, to mention the death of the three brothers; the papal commissaries, also, dispatched an account to Rome, how they were received with all honour in Florence; how they forthwith examined the brothers, and convinced themselves of the incredible infamy of the same, especially of that most godless of all beings, Hieronymus Savonarola,—whereby decisions, speeches, and plans of the same were related, some of which are not contained in the earlier transmitted acts, others are even contradicted by them. For Alexander there was no need of this. He was content that a voice was brought to silence which began seriously to disquiet him. He also knew how to ward off all considerations on the lawlessness of such a proceeding in another way, as he availed himself of the verdict, 'Thy people and thy high priests have given thee over to me.'

But how much soever Alexander might be disposed to attribute the whole proceeding against Savonarola to the Florentines, they did not scruple, in a letter to King Louis XII. of France, who on the news of the imprisonment of Savonarola had interested himself in his favour, to reply on June 30, that they had first received the royal letter after the execution of Savonarola; and, moreover, that if it had even reached them before, yet in this matter they could not have yielded to his wish, since the enquiry was conducted by papal commissaries, and Savonarola was condemned by Rome as a heretic, and accordingly burned. Nevertheless, they continued in Florence to persecute the followers of Savonarola.

On May 7, by a decree of the Signory, the books and manuscripts which Lorenzo de' Medici had delivered to the cloister of San Marco, were brought from thence into the palace of the Signory.

From May 28 to June 8, other vexatious proceedings were had. Fra Mariano degli Ughi, Niccolo

da Milano, Roberto di Gaglano, and the brother of Savonarola, Fra Maurelio, with several others, were banished from the Florentine territory. On June 28, the bell which was rung on the day of the storming of the cloister, was by a further decree of the Signory taken from the brothers of San Marco, and given to the Franciscans at San Miniato, without the city, where it was ordered to remain for fifty years, and on no account to be brought back into the city before that time; yet these latter suffered so many annoyances in consequence, that they soon themselves requested that the bell might be sent back to San Marco. The church, in the meantime, remained two months shut; several priests, who were known as adherents of Savonarola, were cited to Rome, whither instead of going, they sent an equivalent sum of money; many laymen were examined on the charge of heresy, and sentenced to pay a fine. The writings of Savonarola were forbidden, and ordered to be delivered up in the palace of the Archbishop; but because no formal condemnation of the doctrine and writings of Savonarola followed on the side of the Pope, the prohibition was again removed after a few days, and the books restored on request. Thereupon violence and lawlessness on the part of the enemies of Savonarola, of all classes, broke forth again with greater fierceness. Wherever an adherent of Savonarola was to be seen, he was followed with insult and mockery; satires on them were sung in the streets. At the same time it seemed, says Nardi, as if good conduct were legally prohibited, and no greater crime could be found than to have believed the words of Savonarola, and wished a better life at the court of Rome.

But the more unjustly insult and persecution pursued the adherents of Savonarola, the more firmly did the most of them abide by their conviction, which

had penetrated into their inmost soul, and not seldom amounted to fanatical veneration, and sometimes attached itself even to external trifling articles which Savonarola had formerly possessed, or to reliques of himself which they had contrived to obtain, in spite of the strictest vigilance, on the day of the execution, and one of which Count Pico della Mirandola himself kept, set in gold.

The day of his death was celebrated for many years after, by strewing with myrtle branches and flowers, emblematic of martyrdom, early in the morning, the place where he was burned. Medals, representing the Saviour on one side, and on the other a likeness of Savonarola, were struck in honour of him, in which he was designated as prophet and martyr. Laudatory verses were extensively circulated—many would gladly have even made him a Saint; and it was asserted that Pope Alexander VI. became at length so convinced of the innocence of Savonarola, and of the purity of his doctrine, that he had declared himself ready to beatify him. In such a state of public opinion, an impartial judgment is not indeed to be expected on any side; but even the voices of history of that time, were too near the scene of action to reconcile contradictions. From later writers other sources were for the most part shut up, and the verdict remained doubtful. It was only after the sacred investment of prophet, with which his friends had adorned him, had faded away in the course of time, that history could give a more permanent crown to the man.

Long after the death of Savonarola, his influence was felt in the government of Florence. Nearly thirty years had elapsed, when one of their Gonfalonieri, after repeating to the assembled magistracy an oration pronounced by Savonarola, induced them, according to the advice contained in it, to ordain,

that henceforth Jesus Christ should be acknowledged King of Florence; inscriptions were placed in public places recording the fact, and books prepared for each separate quarter of the city, in which all who consented to this regulation registered their names.

Succeeding revolutions in Tuscany have swept away all trace of the alterations effected by Savonarola; the breath of his eloquence for awhile revived the expiring love of liberty in some few hearts, but the surrounding mass was too dull to be kindled.

Let us not, however, as Englishmen, especially in these times, when new attempts at spiritual despotism are made, however insanely, and in moments of anger, but always with danger of serious results, from the ambition of man, neglect to gather from the biography of Savonarola its moral lesson.

The attempt recently made by some of the Anglican clergy, to consolidate the power of the general professional body, is not the work of men possessing exactly the same power as Gregory the Great and Gregory the Seventh, and is, besides, repudiated by the parties most interested in such consolidation, if beneficial,—we mean the bishops of the Church of England. In order for the object to be effected, there must be an ignorant laity as well as a learned clergy, an event not now likely to happen in a very short time. And even then, as experience has shown, so much evil necessarily clings to the system, that it would not be desirable. We cannot risk again the corruption of the religion and the Church of Christ, by leaving both in the hands of a dominant class, whose privileges were so exclusive, that even the sacraments of the Church had no virtue except when administered, and its doctrines no truth except as explained and interpreted, by them. It has once led to superstition so deeply and widely rooted and ramified, that the noblest minds found it almost impossible to

divest themselves of its deadly embraces;—to spiritual despotism, so criminally directed and exerted, that the whole body of believers were called on to surrender the conscience prisoner to the decrees of a homicide and an atheist. While these things are recollected, it will be difficult to renew a system which is chargeable with every possible guilt and error, and was compelled for its own support to dye itself red in the blood of martyrs, and prophets, and saints.

But it will be said that these evils belonged to the Church of Rome, and will not recur in a reformed Church. To which it is answered, that not in the corruptions of a particular Church, but in those of human nature itself, they had their origin. These corruptions are such as to render it highly dangerous, that any body of men should be entrusted with the assumption of any such right and power as would set their authority above the reason and conscience of Christians in general;—an authority which has no tendency to promote the glory of Christ or the piety of individuals, but whose only professed end is the exaltation of the clergy, and which, as it is wholly unsupported by the New Testament Scriptures, preaches not them, nor God in Christ, but its own traditions, and the self-constituted mediatorship of interested men, whom it invests with dignity, and who, in return, gratefully assert its claims. There is One, and One only, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, thus reconciling God and his Church; but this latter term an ambitious clergy appropriated to themselves, otherwise denominating the Church 'the laity,' or at best, 'the faithful,' and then making the Church in their own persons, the mediator between God and the general body of believers. 'To speak of the Church mediating for the people,' says the late all-revered Dr. Arnold, 'did not sound so shocking, and the doctrine so disguised found ready

acceptance. Thus the evil work was consummated; the great majority of the members of the Church were virtually disfranchised; the minority retained the name, but the character of the institution was utterly corrupted.'

The respected writer whom we have just quoted, uses stronger language than we are inclined to employ, when he states that, 'to revive Christ's Church, therefore, is to expel the ANTICHRIST OF PRIESTHOOD, which, as it was foretold of him, *as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God*, and to restore its disfranchised members—the laity—to the discharge of their proper duties in it, and to the consciousness of their paramount importance.' As we have already said, we adopt the affirmative form of the argument, asserting the universal priesthood of the Christian community; but in what the writer intended, we most heartily and zealously concur. Even as the same writer contends, 'if the so-called apostolical succession were—what it is not—of Divine appointment, still, as it is demonstrably and palpably unconnected with holiness, as it would be a mere positive and ceremonial ordinance, it cannot be the point of most importance to insist on; even if it be a sin to neglect this, there are so many far weightier matters equally neglected, that it would be assuredly no Christian prophesying which were to strive to direct our attention to this. But the whole unmoral character of this doctrine—which, if it were indeed of God, would make it a single mysterious exception to all the other doctrines of the Gospel—is, God be thanked, not more certain than its total want of external evidence; the Scripture disclaims it—Christ himself condemns it[1].'

[1] 'Introduction to Christian Life, its Course, its Hindrances, and its Helps. Sermons preached mostly in the

The disfranchisement of the laity induced of old the suppression of sacred Scripture; now that the attempt is again made, the same Scripture is destined to suffer with them. The tract in which its sufficiency was assailed was of a kind so virulent, that no professed infidel ever wrote so offensively on the topics treated in it; 'a vehement straining,' it was, as Dr. Arnold has observed, 'of the faith of his brethren, which should scarcely have been ventured by a true Christian. What,' as he adds, 'if such faith were to give way under the experiment? and if, being convinced that the Scriptures were not more reasonable than Mr. Newman's system, they were to end with believing, not both, but neither?' The difficulties of the Scriptures are unwarrantably made the ground of a *tu quoque* argument; rather they should be used to lead us to revise and correct the notions of inspiration which are generally received, and by giving to them a more rational and philosophical character, preclude the possibility of that inconsistency which serves as the basis of this insidious and unfair argument. Absurd! by establishing the inconsistency of both parties, to seek to prove the consistency of either! If the disputed doctrine of a select Christian priesthood needs such a method of conviction, there must verily be small reason for the faith of any who believe in it.

To claim for the fathers a judicial interpretation of the Scriptures, as if God had by edict authorized their interpretation, is virtually, nay, actually, to repeal those Scriptures, and to substitute others in their room. But no such edict has been issued, and no human power is sufficient to invest the comment with equal authority. The Scriptures, therefore, still

Chapel of Rugby School. By Thomas Arnold, D.D., Head Master of Rugby School, and late Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. 1841.'

appeal to private judgment, and absolve no man from the duty of exercising it, and the responsibility which such exercise implies. Even if the patristic interpretation should be claimed as a revelation, such revelation has only subjective authority, an authority which belongs to the interpretation of every believer; nay, the original revelation itself is only valid for him so far as he himself has the witness of the Spirit testifying to the same truths. At best, all Scripture is but an occasion to excite such inward testimony, and make him conscious of the life of God in his soul, the light of Christ in his reason. This is, at last, the only revelation which is true for any man. As means to this end they were used by Savonarola, and no man realized it more; it became to him an abiding presence, and lived in him even as he lived in it.

Those who deny the exclusive sufficiency of Scripture as a rule of faith, appear to think that by so doing they establish the authority of tradition and of the early fathers; but the fact is not so, evidence is required to prove their right to such authority; and when we have done all that history and logic will enable us to do towards demonstrating the validity of their claims, we are compelled at last to submit them to the tests which reason and revelation are always willing to supply, and to bring them, not only before the bar of private judgement, but to try them by the oracle of conscience; and as it condemns or confirms their united testimony, to accept or reject it, whether individually or collectively.

An attempt has lately been made to induce Christians to live rather by the Prayer-book than by the Bible, and consequently, to restore certain directions of the Rubric, which had become obsolete. In this it has been too readily taken for granted, that these restorations were desirable, nay, obligatory, as

points of duty, forgetting that the portions fallen into desuetude were, for the most part, originally left standing as concessions to the prejudices of a previous time, and had naturally passed away with those prejudices and with that time. We have laws in the statute-book in the same condition; but if any attempt is made to revive these, on the part of informers or others, whereby individuals, who had reason to think the law was dead, might be annoyed, the custom of the legislature, when appealed to on the subject, has constantly been, not to re-enact, but to repeal the law; that is, being dead, they have buried it. Many of these neglected rites and ceremonies have been, by sincere and pious churchmen, deemed superstitious and idolatrous; and many of the most earnest and fervent Christians have, in all ages of the Church, wished, like Savonarola, to abolish such observances altogether, or to adopt as few of them as possible. At best, they are but helps to minds that are not strong enough to go alone; and the highest class of Christian worshippers find them rather hindrances than aids. But for the latter, no legislation is needed, and institutions are only wanted for those who have not attained the full stature of the perfect man. For these some form of worship is desirable; and therefore it were perhaps well, not only that a convocation of the clergy should be promoted to decide on what is expedient for effecting the object in view, but that the laity throughout Christendom should be consulted, in order that a common understanding and agreement should be obtained, and thereby the entire Church re-edified on the widest possible basis, that its correspondent elevation may be ensured, since the one is always necessarily proportioned to the other.

As the reformation of the Church commenced with restoring the Scriptures to their proper place, so will it be completed by restoring the laity to theirs. The

Church is something more than a University, consisting of a learned class; it is a society identified with the members, laws, and government of a Christian people, a holy nation. To bring out this cheering truth into full demonstration, Dr. Arnold proposed the revival of an extinct order—that of deacons. No Church in any town should exist without its deacons, they are as essential to its completeness as its bishops and its presbyters. Not only is this not so now, but the clergy have here been guilty of a usurpation. The junior members of the clerical body are found bearing the name of deacons, while exercising the functions of presbyters, though productive of exceeding inconvenience, even to the frequent suspension of one of the sacraments of the Church. Such are the errors which have come down to us from a corrupt age, by which the clergy were in such a peculiar degree invested with the attributes of the Church, that at last they retained them almost exclusively—nay, were put in place of the Church, while the great mass were deprived of their proper share in its government, in its offices, and therefore in its benefits, and in a sense of its solemn responsibilities. The rectification of these errors would be productive of a Church extension more real than that proposed under a Building Act; not an extension of churches of bricks and mortar, but of temples of the living God, constructed of lively stones, whose builder and maker is Christ. 'It were,' says Dr. Arnold, 'a yet truer and more blessed Church extension, which should add to the building and the single minister, the real living Church itself, with all its manifold offices and ministries, with its pure discipline, with its holy and loving sense of brotherhood. Without this Christ will still indeed, as heretofore, lay his hands on some few sick folk and heal them, his grace will convey the truths of his Gospel to individual souls, and they will be-

lieve and be saved; but the fulfilment of prophecy, the triumph of Christ's kingdom, the changing an evil world into a world redeemed,—this can only be done by a revival of the Christian Church in its power—the living temple of the Holy Ghost, which, visibly to all mankind in the wisdom and holiness of its members, showed that God was in the midst of it. It may be that is a fond hope which we may not expect to see realized; but look, on the one hand, to the strong and triumphant language of prophecy; I know not how any hope to the advancement of Christ's kingdom can be more bold than God's word will warrant: and on the other, tracing the past history of the Church, its gradual corruption may be deduced distinctly from one early and deadly mischief, which has destroyed its efficacy; so that if this mischief can be removed, and the Church become such as Christ designed it to be, it does not seem presumptuous to hope, that his appointed instrument, working according to his will, should be able to obtain the full blessings of his promise.'

The usurpation which men will no longer permit, was useful for the time while it prevailed, but only in an exceptional point of view; nay, it was even needful in an age of great and unavoidable ignorance, but for that very reason must be superseded in a more enlightened era. Despotisms, whether spiritual or temporal, are necessary where the people are only carnal. There could be no tyrants if there were not slaves ready made for submission. The higher interests of humanity are thereby protected, but it is by an alternative of evils; and the sooner they can become emancipated from the thraldom the better. The constitution of Church and State is therefore so divinely appointed, that it may adapt itself to altered circumstances and the various developements of time and place. The mistake that is made, is by sup-

posing that in all cases this adaptation will proceed by a mutual growth of the body and its envelopements, by gradual enlargement and by accretion, instead of recognizing the infinite compensations by which nature wonderfully subdues difficulties otherwise insuperable; thus providing that the environment incapable of expansion or addition shall, as the body swells, be spasmodically cast off; that the latter, being so released, may be left to push its growth, and by a new concretion form a new covering, adapted in every part to its increased dimensions, and that as often as may be needed.

What is true of the ways of nature is also true of those of God, for she is but His mirror and messenger. His providence has dominion equally over matter and spirit, and exhibits itself as much in the Church as in the world. How sings Spenser—

'And is there care in heaven? And is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is; else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts. But oh! th' exceeding grace
Of Highest God, that loves His creatures so,
And all His works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels He sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked men, to serve his wicked foe.

How oft do they their silver bowers leave
To come to succour us that succour want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant,
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love, and nothing for reward.
O why should Heavenly God to man have such regard?'

The unappeasable desire for an unerring authority which the history of the Church so strongly illustrates, is one of the primary instincts of the human mind; it is connected with a firm belief that there is a standard

of certainty, to which it is possible for man to appeal. It has been sought in a general consent of wise and holy men; in the established opinions and usages of a long-existing institution; and, finally, in the unappealable decrees of a visible ruler. But now it has been proved that these are corruptible, and have been corrupted; also, the soundest philosophy teaches, that the root of certainty is not to be found in anything that is external to us, but must be sought in the very constituent laws of our being, as the utterances of that Word which was in the beginning, which is with God, and which is none other than God himself. The only infallible judge recognizable by the true Christian, is no mortal man, however wise, knowing, pious, learned, or powerful on earth; but One, the Lord in heaven, that immortal Man, by whom the Father created and shall judge the world —the risen and ascended Christ, who ever liveth to make intercession for his redeemed with the great Parent of the universe.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

I.

HYMN TO INFLAME THE HEART TO DIVINE LOVE.—Page 40.

[The following is the original of the paraphrase, given in the text.

"*Laude ad infiammare il core al divino amore.*"

Che fai qui, cuore?
Che fai qui, cuore?
Vanne al divino amore!

L'Amore, Gesu Christò,
Che dolcemente infiamma,
Fa lieto ogni cuor tristo,
Che lui sospira e brama.
Chi puramente l'ama,
Si spoglia d'ogni errore.

Se tu ti senti afflitto,
Questo è dolce conforto,
Questo è quel dolce lito,
E quel felice porto,
E qual sempre ti esorto,
Amar con gran fervore.

Non star, cuor mio, più meco;
Se viver vuoi in pace,
Vanne a Gesu e sta seco,
Che'l mondo è si fallace
Che ormai a lui non piace,
Se non, chi è traditore.

Se tu stai qui in terra,
Sarà tua vita amara,
In ogni luogo è guerra
E fede e pace e rara:
Se'l te la vita cara,
Vanne al divin splendore.

Non ti fidar d'altrui,
Che ogn' uomo è pien d'inganni.
Se tu ne vai a Lui,
Dolci saran gli affanni,
E spenderai i tuoi anni
Con merito ed onore.

Se tu 'l trovi umilmente,
A lui mi raccomanda,
E fa, che sia fervente
A far la mia domanda,
Che sua dolcezza spanda
Sopra'l mio gran dolore.

E quando sarai giunto,
Darai' gli un baccio santo,
Se mani e' piedi appunto.
Abbraccia'l tutto quanto,
Infiammati in lui tanto
Che l' brami a tutte l'ore.

Se lui la man ti prende,
Non la lassar giammai!
Chi del suo amor s'accende,
Non sente eterno guai,
E se con lui tu stai,
Tu spengi ogni timore.

Sta con Gesu, cuor mio.
E lascia ogn' uomo gridare!
Questo è il tuo dolce Dio,
E quale tu debbi amare,
E per suo amor portare
Ogni mondan furore.

Prendete tutti l'arme
Nemici d'ogni bene,
Che più non temo, e parme
Che dolci sian le pene.
E questo si conviene
A chi sta con l'amore.

Che fai qui, cuore?
Che fai qui, cuore?
Vanne al divino amore!

II.

JOHANNES CASSIAN.—Page 52.

JOHN CASSIAN, a celebrated monk of the fourth and fifth centuries, born in Scythia. He spent a part of his early life in the monastery of St. Bethlehem, along with his friend the monk Germain, in Syria. From this monastery, they went to one of Upper Egypt, where (in the year 390) they practised the most austere rites of the monastic life. He spent several years in the monastery of Scete, considered the most perfect of these establishments. They went barefooted, poorly clothed, and subsisted on the labour of their own hands.

After some years, Cassian went to Bethlehem, and from thence to Constantinople, where he received instructions from the celebrated Chrysostom, who ordained him. When Chrysostom was an exile, Cassian had the commission to carry to Rome letters, in which the clergy of Constantinople undertook the defence of their persecuted pastor. In 414 or 415, he settled in Marseilles, where he founded two monasteries, one of men, and the other of women. According to the chronicle of Prosper, he lived there to

433. Dupin relates his death in 440, while Baillet carries it up to 448. Dom Rivet thinks that he died in 434 or 435.

In reviewing, with Augustine against the Pelagians, the tenet of the existence of original sin, and the necessity of inward grace for all the acts of piety, Cassian departed from the doctrine of the holy doctor upon the distribution of this grace, which he attributed to the merits of the man.

His Collationes or Conferences (in 12 books) of the fathers, is considered his best work. He wrote also (7 books) on the Incarnation of the Word.

Cassian was a Semi-Pelagian. His sect was condemned by Synods and the Church. To obtain an idea of one of his collations, take book xii. chapter 16, which he gives from the blessed Abbot Chrenicre, where he treats of the end and the means of acquiring and preserving chastity. This chapter begins with the remarkable words, 'Proinde unicuique nostrum adversus spiritum fornicationis totis viribus desudanti, victoria singularis est, de merito conatus sui remedium non sperare,' which implies, that there are exertions on our part necessary for success, that we have no right to expect success without labour; and that we must strive against the tendencies to an opposite course of events. He then proceeds to explain this in a sensible manner: 'That though the slothful, and the careless, and the negligent, may not understand the effects of these things, I am certain,' says the Abbot, 'that they are to be recognized and proved by the studious and the spiritual man; for there is as much distinction between one man and another as there is between heaven and hell—between Christ and Belial. According to the very sentiment of our Lord the Saviour, 'Si quis mihi ministrat, me sequatur;' that is, if any one serve Me, let him follow Me, and where I am, there also will My servant be. Again, 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.''

III.

. . . . . 'till it received new aid from other learned Greeks, who were driven from Constantinople by the

dread of the Turks, or by the destruction of the eastern empire.'—Page 116.

Amongst the learned Greeks who sought shelter in Florence under Cosimo's patronage, were Demetrius Chalcondyles, Johannes Andronicus, Calistus, Constantius, and Johannes Lascaris, in whom the Platonic philosophy obtained fresh partizans, and by whose support it began openly to oppose itself to that of Aristotle. Between the Greek and Italian professors a spirit of emulation was kindled that operated most favourably on the cause of letters: public schools were instituted at Florence for the study of the Greek tongue. The facility of diffusing their labours by the newly-discovered art of printing stimulated the learned to fresh exertions; and in a few years, the cities of Italy vied with each other in the number and elegance of works produced from the press.

IV.

HYMN ON THE LOVE OF JESUS.—Page 186.

The following is the original of the paraphrase given in the text. The author is indebted for this version to a lady.

Lauda, composta dal Frate Hieronymo, dela Consolatione del Crucifixo.

Quando il soave e mio fido conforto,
Per la pietà della mia stanca vita,
Con la sua dolce chitarra fornita,
Mi trae dall' onde al suo beato porto,
Io sento al cuor un ragionar accorto
Dal resonante ed infiammato ligno,
Che mi fa si benigno,
Che di fuor sempre lagrimar vorrei.
Ma lassi! gli occhi miei
Degni non son della soave pioggia,
Che della stilla, dove amor s' allogia.

Qual veloce, qual sitibondo cervo
Si vide al fonte mai tal salto fare,

Qual alla voce il cuor, che gia spuntare
Il fin acciaio io vidi assai protervo,
Sagitte acute gira il bianco nervo
Da penetrare un solido diamante,
Vivace acqua stillante,
Che'l sdegnoso Neron farebbe pio,
Lassa qual cuor si rio:
Non fan prigion le corde e le saette
Le voce sorde, e le dolci parolette.

Alma che fai? or questa, or quella corda
Soavemente dentro al cuor risuona,
Che mi conforta ed al camin mi sprona,
Benche l'andato tempo mi ricorda.
O quanto bene al mio desir s'accorda
Quella armonia ed il suon delle parole:
Palidette viole
Da terra trae nel serto suo beato.
O felice peccato!
Che cosa, o qual ti fa degno d'onore?
Chi t'ha donato un tanto Redentore?

Venite, genti, dal mar Indo al Mauro,
E chiunque è stanco dentro nel pensiero,
Non forza darmi quivi, non impero,
Prendete senza fine argento ed auro:
Venite, e pov'ri e nudi al gran tesauro,
Alle dolci acque d'un celeste fonte.
Levate ormai la fronte,
Che più non temo un uom' coperto d'arme,
E senza dubbio parme
Gia sciolti i laccii, e dentro il cuor avampa,
Mirando il segno, e la spietata stampa.

Ahi! orbo mondo, dimmi chi l'ha spento
In questa valle oscura e tenebrosa
L'amor d'una bellissima amorosa,
E la pietà del grave suo lamento?
Lasso! fossi lei, qual io son contento
Farmi d'un piede pur l'estrema parte,
E nell' ultime carte—
Benchè indegno assai, porre il nostro nome—
So che l' aspre some

E le catene porterebbe in pace,
Forte di spirito, e d' animo vivace.

Ma che debbo altro ormai, che pianger sempre,
Dolce Gesu, che senza Te son nulla—
Io cominciai al latte ed alla culla
A declinar dalle tue dolci tempre.
Ed or' che fia di me, se Tu non tempri,
Le male corde e la scordata lira ?
Per l' universo gira
Questo sfrenato e rapido torrente.
Che or fossin tutte spente
Sue voglie ingorde ed il subito furore,
Ed io col mio dolcissimo signore !

Canzonetta, io ti prego
Che spesso meco sola tu ragioni,
Che'l mio cuor tu sproni.
Io dico a voi, Signor, dove si mostra
Il dolce aspetto della terra vostra.

V.

LIST OF THE WRITINGS OF SAVONAROLA.

A critical catalogue of the numerous writings of Savonarola, which, even according to Machiavelli's judgment, are the best witnesses of his learning, penetration, and mental powers, is the more desirable, since, notwithstanding the meritorious labours, in this respect, of Quetif, Echard, and Wharton, the catalogue given by them allows of many corrections and additions. Besides, instead of the undetermined and necessarily inconsequent division followed by them, into ascetic, parenitic-prophetic, dogmatic, and polemical-apologetic writings, the most natural possible order, that is, the chronological, ought here to be attempted. Of the editions the oldest are chiefly named; writings as yet unedited are marked with an asterisk.

1472.*Canzona de Ruinâ Mundi.
1475.*Canzona de Ruinâ Ecclesiæ.

1475. Lettera al padre suo Nicolo, scritta a di XXV d'Aprile, quando entrò nella religione; Venez. 1547, 8vo. Also at the beginning of the Sermon on Job; Venez. 1545. Further, in Jo. Franc. Pici Vita cit. 2 vols. Paris, 1674, 8vo.

1492.—Lettera ai suoi diletti Figliuoli in Christo Gesu, uniti nel Convento di S. Marco di Firenze; Venez. 1547, 8vo; Jo. Franc. Pici Vita cit. 2 vols. Paris, 1674, 8vo.

—— Trattato dell' Umiltà; Firenze, 1492, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo.

—— Trattato dell' Orazione Mentale; Firenze, 1492, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo.

—— Tratto dell' Amore di Gesu Christo; Firenze, 1492, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo. The last three treatises also in Molti Devotiss. Tratt.; Venez. 1547, 8vo.

1493.—Prediche XXV sopra il Salmo, Quam bonus Israel Deus, &c., predicate in Firenze, in S. Maria del Fiore in uno Adento del 1493, dal medesimo poi in Latina lingua raccolte, e da *Fra Girol Giannotti* da Pistoja in lingua volgare tradotte; Venez. 1528, 4to; 1543, 1544, 8vo.

1494.—Sermones XLVI Quadragesimales super Arcam Noë; Venet. 1536, 8vo. Must be a selection of Sermons really preached, made in the Latin language by Savonarola or a translator.

—— In Orationem Dominicam Expositio Quadruplex; Paris, 1517, 12mo; Venet. 1537, 16mo. In Italian, Esposizione sopra il Pater noster, composta in Latino e da un suo amico tradotta in volgare; Firenze, 1494.

—— Epistola ad una donna Bolognese sopra la Comunione; Firenze, 1494, 1496, 4to; Venez. 1547, 8vo.

—— Esposizione sopra l'Ave Maria; Firenze, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo. The latter three writings also in Molti Devotiss. Tratt.; Venez. 1547, 8vo.

—— Prediche XXIII sopra alquanti Salmi e sopra Aggeo Profeta, fatte del mese di Novembre e Decembre l'anno 1494. Raccolte dalla viva voce da *Fra Stefano da Co di Ponte*, suo Discepolo; Venez. 1544, 8vo.

1495. Prediche XXX sopra diversi Salmi e molte altre notabilissime matèrie; Firenze, 1496, 4to; Venez. 1517, 1520, 4to; 1539, 1543, 8vo.

1495. Prediche XLVII sopra Job, fatte in Firenze, l'anno 1494 [stilo Romano, 1495], nuovamente venute in luce. Con una lettera al suo Padre, quando entrò nella religione; Venez. 1545, 8vo.

——*Epistola ad Regem Christianissimum Francorum. The editor of the Vita del P. Girol. Savonarola, scritta dal P. *Pacif. Burlamacchi*, &c. Lucca, 1764, mentions a Lettera al Re di Francia, data in S. Marco, a di xxvi di Maggio, 1490, 4to, senza luogo ed anno, but which has not been yet seen by others.

—— Compendio di Rivelazioni; Firenze, 1495, 4to: in Latin, Compendium Revelationum; Florent. et Paris, 1496, 4to; Venet. 1537, 8vo.

—— L'Astrologia Divinatrice in corroborazione della Rifutazione Astrologice del Sig. Conte Giov. Pico, della Mirandola; Firenze, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1513, 1536, 8vo; in Latin, by Th. Boninsegni, Florent. 1561, 8vo.

——*Epistoletta ad uno suo familiare Inc. Magnifice Vir, Noi siamo nel sesto anno dal di, che io cominciai ad invitare in Firenze l'Italia a penitenza, &c., in the library of the late Count Boutourlin, at Florence.

——*Epistola ad Alexandrum Papam Sextum die xxxi Junii, 1495.

—— Trattato Secondo dell' Orazione; Firenze, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 8vo.

—— Dieci Regole convenienti da orare nel tempo della Tribolazione; Firenze, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 8vo.

—— Regole del Ben Vivere Christiano, ai suoi Discepoli; Firenze, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 8vo.

—— Regole a tutti i Religiosi molto utili, date ai suoi frati per modo d'una scala; Firenze, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 8vo.

—— Epistola a Madalena Contessa della Mirandola, della Perfezzioni del Stato Religioso; Firenze, 1495, 4to. Venez. 1538, 8vo.

—— Trattato sopra la Vita Vedovile; Firenze, 1495, 1496, 4to; Venez. 1538, 8vo.

—— Operetta molto divota sopra i dieci Comandamenti di Dio; Firenze, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 8vo.

—— Trattato del Misterio della Croce; Firenze, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 8vo.

1495. Trattato del Sacramento e de Misterii della Messa e regola utile; Firenze, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 8vo.

—— Epistola al Convento de' Frati Predicatori a Fiesole, della Perfezzione e delle Tentazioni; Firenze, 1495, 4to; Venez. 1538, 8vo. The latter ten treatises also in Molti Devotiss. Tratt., Venez. 1547, 8vo.

—— Psalmus, seu Oratio devotissima: Diligam Te Domine, &c.; Venet. 1495, 8vo; 1517, 16mo; Tubing. 1621, 12mo.

1496. Prediche XLVIII sopra Amos Profeta e sopra Zacharia Profeta, &c. raccolte dalla viva voce da *Lorenzo Violi*; Firenze, 1497; Venez. 1514, 1528, 4to; 1539, 1543, 8vo.

—— De Simplicitate Vitæ Christianæ libri quinque; Florent. 1496, 4to; Paris, 1511, 8vo; Colon. 1550, 16mo. Tradotti in volgare da *Hieronymo Benivieni;* Firenze, 1496, 1529, 4to; Venez. 1547, 8vo.

—— Meditatio in Psalmum, Qui regis Israel, &c.; Florent. 1509, 8vo; Lugdun. 1540, 16mo; Tubing. 1621, 12mo; in Italian, Firenze, 1496, 4to.

—— Prediche XXIX sopra Ruth e Michea, fatte l'anno 1496, ne' giorni delle feste, finito che ebbe la Quaresima; Firenze, 1497, 4to; Venez. 1514, 4to; 1539, 1543, 8vo.

—— Regole del discreto ed ordinato Modo de Viver nella Religione, Esortazione fatta il di xiv di Settembre 1496; Firenze, 1496, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo.

—— Responsio ad Alexandrum Papam Sextum, die xxix Octobris, 1496.

—— Apologeticum Fratrum Congregationis S. Marci de Florentia; Firenze, 1497, 4to. Jo. Franc. Pici Vita cit. 2 vols. Paris, 1674, 8vo.

—— Prediche XLIX sopra Ezechiel Profeta, fatte in S. Maria del Fiore, cominciando la prima Domenica dell'Advento, 1496; Firenze, 1497, fol.; Venez. 1520, 4to; 1541, 8vo.

1497. Tractatus de Vitæ Spiritualis Perfectione ad septem illius Gradus a S. Bonaventura distinctos; Florent. 1497, 4to; Venet. 1537, 16mo. Tradotto in volgare da Filippo Cioni; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo.

—— Epistola a tutta la Congregazione dei Frati di S. Marco, del Modo di resistere alle Tentazioni e di per-

venire alla Perfezzione; Firenze, 1497, 4to; Venez. 1537, 1547, 8vo.

1497. Del discreto e conveniente modo di far Orazione, ai suoi Frati; Firenze, 1497, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo.

—— Del adoperarsi in Carità secondo la Divina Disposizione, ai suoi Frati; Firenze, 1497, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo.

—— Epistola alle Sorelle del terzo ordine di S. Domenico, della Lezzione Spirituale; Firenze, 1497, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo.

—— Epistola ai Frati suoi, della peste spirituale; Firenze, 1497, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo.

—— Epistola al P. Fra Pietro di Beccuto, del non temere ne fuggire la Morte; Firenze, 1497, 4to; Venez. 1538, 1547, 8vo. The latter seven writings are found partly also in Molti Devotiss. Tratt; Venez. 1547, 8vo, partly in Quetif, Epistt. Spiritual. Paris, 1674, 8vo.

—— Predica fatta la mattina dell' Ascensione 1497. Raccolta per maestro *Hieron Cinozzi*, publicata alla riquisizione del Rev. P. Frate Hieronymo. At the end of the Sermons on Ezekiel the Prophet; Venez. 1541, 8vo.

—— Epistola a tutti gli Eletti di Dio e fedeli Christiani; Firenze, 1497, 4to.; Venez. 1537, 8vo.

—— Epistola a certe Persone Devote perseguitate per la verità da lui predicata; Firenze, 1497, 4to; Venez. 1537, 8vo.

—— Epistola a tutti li Christiani e diletti di Dio; Firenze, 1497, 4to.

—— Epistola ad Fratrem quendam, contra Sententiam Excommunicationis contra se nuper injuste latam; Firenze, 1497, 4to.

—— Epistola ad uno amico ma vacillante per le persecuzioni; Firenze, 1497, 4to. The latter six writings also printed in Jo. Franc Pici Vita cit. 2 vols.; Paris, 1674, 8vo.

—— Epistola ad Alexandrum Papam Sextum die xx Maji 1497.

—— Loqui prohibeor, et tacere non possum. In the library of the late Count Boutourlin in Florence.

—— Lamentatio Sponsæ Christi adversus tepidos et pseu-

do-predicatores, etc.; Florent. 1497, 4to; Venet. 1537, 8vo.

1497. Lettera a Madonna Caterina di Sforli.

—— Copia d'una lettera al Duca di Ferrara, al di d'Agosto 1497.

—— Lettera alla Ven. Madre Priora del Monasterio di S. Domenico di Pisa.

—— Lettera alla Signora Maria Angela Sforza, Duchessa di Ferrara.

—— Lettera al Sig. Giov. Franc. Pico della Mirandola al di viii di Maggio 1497.

—— Al medesimo dapoi che ingiustamente fu scomunicato.

—— Lettera a M. Ludovico Pittori, cittadino Ferrarese.

—— Lettere tre all' Illustrissima Mad. Giov. Caraffa, moglie del Conte Giov. Pico della Mirandola.

—— Lettera a due giovani Ferraresi.

—— Lettera a M. Bertrando Ferrarese, Protonotario Apostolico. According to Burlamacchi, Vita cit. Lucca 1764, p. 102, the last-named seven letters are found in *Stef. Baluzii* Miscellanea etc.; Lucca, 1761, which edition unluckily is not accessible.

—— Lettera al Serenissimo Imperatore.

—— Lettera al Re e Regina di Spagna.

—— De Veritate Prophetica Dialogus; Florent. 1497, fol. in Italian, Dialogo della Verita Profetica; Firenze, 1497, fol.; Venez 1548, 8vo.

—— Discorso circa il reggimento e governo degli stati e specialmente sopra il governo della città di Firenze; 1497, 4to; Londra, 1765, 4to.

—— Triumphus Crucis, sive de Veritate Fidei libri quatuor, Florent. 1497, 1524, 4to. Very often also elsewhere, in Italian.

—— Della Verità della Fede Christiana, sopra il glorioso trionfo della croce di Christo; Firenze, 1497, 1516, 4to; Venez. 1547, 8vo.

1498. Epistola ad Alexandrum Papam Sextum die xiii Martii 1498.

—— Prediche XXII sopra l'Esodo e sopra alquanti Salmi, fatte in S. Maria del Fiore cominciando la domenica della Settuagesima il di xi di Febrajo 1498; Raccolte per Messer *Lorenzo Violi*; Firenze, 1498, 4to; Venez. 1517, 1520, 4to; 1540, 8vo.

—— Sermone fatto a molti Sacerdoti, religiosi e secolari a S. Marco a di xv di Febrajo 1498; Firenze, 1498, 4to.

1498. Esortazione fatta al popolo a di vii d'Aprile 1498, nel qual di si aveva da fare l'esperimento del fuoco in piazza de' Signori; Firenze, 1498, 4to. Appended to the Prediche sopra l'Esodo, etc.; Venez. 1540, 8vo.

—— Regola del Ben Vivere Christiano, composta mentre era in carcere; Firenze, 1498, 1529, 4to; Venez. 1547, 8vo.

—— Meditatio in Psalmum, Miserere mei Deus, etc.; Florent. 1508, 12mo; and frequently elsewhere—In Italian, Esposizione sopra il Salmo, Miserere mei Deus etc. quando era in prigione nel mese di Maggio 1498. Tradotta di Latino in volgare ad istanza di certe devote donne; Firenze, 4to.

—— Meditatio in Psalmum, In Te Domine speravi, etc.; Florent. 1508, 12mo, and frequently elsewhere, in Italian; Venez. 1535, 1547, 8vo. Both together; Tubing. 1621, 12mo.

—— Orazione che fece a di xxiii di Maggio 1498, quando era preparato alla comunione; Firenze, 4to. Also with the Esposizione sopra il Salmo, Miserere mei Deus, etc.; Firenze, 4to.

Writings of which the time is unknown.

Compendium Logicæ; Florent. 1497, 4to; Venet, 1542, 8vo.

Compendium totius Philosophiæ tam naturalis, quam moralis; Venet. 1542, 8vo.

Opus de divisione, ordine et utilitate omnium Scientiarum necnon poesis ratione; Venet. 1542, 8vo. All these works together—Wittemberg, 1596, 8vo. The latter, with a letter to Ugelinus Verinus, as a reply to his transmission of his Carmen de Christianæ Religionis ac vitæ monasticæ Felicitate, MSS. *Biblioth. Magliab.* c. l. vii. cod. 1150.

Eruditorium Confessorum; Paris, 1517, 8vo; Venet. 1520, 1543, 8vo.

Dialogus cui titulus, Solatium Itineris mei, lib. vii.

Genev. 1536, 8vo; Venet. 1537, 16mo; in Italian, Venez. 1547, 1556, 8vo. A Latin edition different from this in 3 books; Venet. 1537, 8vo, is marked as unfinished; but both perhaps may be regarded as preparations for his Triumphus Crucis.

Sermones XIX super Epist. Joannis Primam; Venet. 1536, 8vo; in Italian, Venez. 1547, 1556, 8vo.

Sermoni due fatti ai suoi Frati nella vigilia di natale sopra la natività del nostro Signor Gesu Christo; Venez. 1538, 1548, 8vo.

Della provocazione di Dio allo rinovazione della chiesa; Venez. 1517, 1520, 4to.

Trattato della rivelazione della riformazione della chiesa divinitus fatta, etc.; Venez. 1536, 1543, 8vo.

Precatio ex Psalmis Davidis collecta pro remissione peccatorum; and, Oratio sub compendio omnes septem petitiones in Precatione Dominica expressas complectens, in Meditatt. in Psalmos, etc.; Tubing. 1621, 12mo.

Trattato della contemplazione circa Gesu gia elevato in aria sulla croce; Venez. 1547, 8vo; also in Molti Devotiss. Tratt.; Venez. 1547, 8vo.

Alcuni Sermoni divoti sopra il principio della Cantica ed altri luoghi della Sacra Scrittura: Sermones VIII super Lamentationem Hieremiæ prophetæ: Brevis expositio in librum Esther; Venet. 1556; are rather perhaps thoughts and remarks, probably for different Sermons not printed, taken in a great degree from the above-mentioned Bible of Savonarola.

*Alcune laudi e canzone.

*Expositio super x Psalmos ex Psalmis graduum. MSS.

*Meditationes diversæ in aliquot S. Scripturæ loca. MSS. with the already mentioned Sermones super Epist. Joannis Primam, written by Savonarola's own hand for a gift to Domenico Benevieni, now or lately in possession of the bookseller Molini in Florence.

Expositio Habacuch prophetæ. MSS. Biblioth. *Nanian.* MSS. Latt. cod. Cl. No. 28.

THE END.

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